

COLUMN

israelis
gatecrash
Amman wedding

AMMAN (AP) — A wedding was held at the Jordanian capital on Wednesday. The bride and groom took to the stage in the singer's at the reception from their telephone. Other guests were arriving and a couple of them were seen walking in following the ceremony.

Filipino diplomat loses job after being manhandled

MANILA (AP) — A Filipina diplomat has been suspended from her post in Jordan over her treatment of a Palestinian policeman.

Scores of people were wounded in street fighting that followed the mosque clash at 12:30 p.m. and clashes erupted throughout the day, the sound of gunfire faded after nightfall.

Friday's clashes were the most serious between Islamic

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestinian police opened fire Friday on thousands of worshippers outside a mosque and clashed with rock-throwing Islamic militants in running street battles. At least 13 people were killed and more than 200 wounded.

Police rounded up about 300 Islamic militants. Islamic militants fired on police outside a hospital and burned a police van.

interests. "Collaborators, collaborators," they shouted. The bloodiest episode under Palestinian self-rule erupted when, for the first time, Gaza police opened fire at stone throwers outside the city's main mosque after

noon prayers. The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas had planned a demonstration at the mosque, a centre of resistance to autonomy, but security forces had surrounded the area.

It was only after darkness

(Continued on page 7)

Shaath: PNA cannot disarm opposition

MINISTER OF International Cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Nabil Shaath said Thursday the PNA cannot disarm Islamic groups in Palestine and refuses to be a "tool in the hands of Israel" to strike at all Islamic opposition groups.

In a press conference held in Cairo, Dr. Shaath said "due to Israel's failure to respect the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, we do not enjoy any public support to disarm the opposition groups or take tough measures against them."

He added that the Palestinian Authority will not enter into a civil war with its people and will not accept to be the "blackman who implements the desires of his white master."

Dr. Shaath added that the Palestinian authority respects its security agreements with Israel and will not embark on any violent actions against it.



Palestinian riot police forces stand guard and supporters of Islamic movements (AFP photo) blocking a street in Gaza on Friday following heavy clashes between Palestinian policemen



Hamas supporters throw stones at Palestinian policemen during clashes in Gaza City on Friday (AFP photo)

MECC elects new leader

LIMASSOL (AP) — The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Friday elected the Rev. Riad Jarjour as its new general secretary, replacing Gabriel Habib, who has held the post since 1977.

Father Jarjour, a minister of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, has been an associate general secretary for the last eight years. The U.S.-educated

clergyman takes over the Limassol-based council at a time when minority Christians are on the retreat in the Middle East. The crisis, and efforts to seek a dialogue with Muslims to stanch the swelling emigration of Christians from the region, is high on the agenda of the week-long Ecumenical assembly of the MECC, which opened Wednesday.

Father Habib has been a forceful advocate of dialogue with Muslims during his tenure as general secretary of the MECC.

Paris denies report of FIS contact

PARIS (AP) — The French foreign ministry Friday denied a report that envoy sent by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur had contacted Tahar Kebir, an exiled leader of the outlawed Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

The report in the weekly Paris Match magazine said that emissaries from the prime minister's office had contacted Mr. Kebir, the head of the FIS executive body in exile, who lives in Germany. "There is no contact of this nature, and France does not maintain contacts with the FIS," Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said.

Mr. Aziz said Iraq had met the conditions set in U.N. resolutions for lifting the economic sanctions and oil embargo by destroying all weapons of mass destruction and permitting a monitoring system to ensure that those weapons cannot be re-acquired. He called reports that some chemical and biological weapons might have been hidden merely "allegations."

He denied that Iraq had refused to release some Kuwaiti prisoners of war — another U.N. requirement for lifting the sanction — but said that there remain people

Most Security Council states favour lifting sanctions — Aziz

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said Friday that most of the 15 members of the Security Council favour lifting the sanctions against his country, indicating that only the United States and Britain were preventing it.

Mr. Aziz said the council's official response to Iraq's recognition of Kuwait was much less enthusiastic than most members had wanted.

He said only two members, apparently referring to the United States and Britain, were preventing a lifting of the sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in Aug. 1990. As permanent members of the council, the United States and Britain can veto any measure lifting sanctions.

Mr. Aziz declined to speculate on when the sanctions might be lifted. However, Western diplomats have said they believed that the remaining issues blocking the lifting of sanctions could be cleared up by as early as March.

An Iraqi official on Friday accused the United States and Britain of trying to squeeze the life out of his country by opposing the easing of sanctions.

"The lifting of sanctions would allow Iraq to buy medicines and food, but that has become impossible after the underhand veto against it by the neocon American pairing," said Saad Kassem Hammudi, an official of the ruling Baath Party.

Mr. Hammudi, quoted by Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra, said the United Nations "should study the Russian proposal in favour of lifting the embargo on Iraq."

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said after a visit to Baghdad in October he would work for an easing of sanctions by the Security Council, in return for an Iraqi pledge to recognise Kuwait.

Baaghdad has rejected a U.N. resolution allowing for partial sales of oil to allow it to meet its humanitarian needs. It says the strict U.N. controls required would infringe on its sovereignty.

Iraq's recognition of Kuwait is a fundamental step towards lifting the oil embargo and other economic sanctions, said New Zealand Ambassador to the U.N. Colm Keating.

Mr. Keating predicted that

the U.N. Special Commission could conceivably report by March that Iraq had met the disarmament requirements for lifting the sanctions.

Political recognition will allow Iraq and Kuwait to talk directly, potentially clearing up the issues of prisoners and property plundered during the Iraqi occupation.

The main Iraqi opposition group says it supports Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and would like Kuwaiti backing in efforts to overthrow Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Ahmad Al Chalabi, head of the opposition Iraqi National Congress, was quoted Friday in the Arabic daily Al Hayat as saying it was necessary to recognise Kuwait's independence and the U.N.-demarcated border.

"We respect all the U.N. resolutions relevant to Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait, including Resolution 833 which recognises Kuwait's sovereignty and the division of the border," Mr. Chalabi told the paper in a telephone interview from his headquarters in northern Iraq.

He added: "We urge Kuwait to provide additional support to the Iraqi people in their efforts to liberate Iraq and overthrow the dictatorship in Baghdad."

Smaller opposition groups have rejected Iraq's recognition of Kuwait, saying such action should be taken by a democratically elected government without foreign interference.

The Iraqi National Congress is an umbrella organisation for Shiite and Sunni Muslim factions and Kurdish rebels operating from abroad.

It recently moved its headquarters to Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, and the group's executive council is to meet in the mountain resort of Saladin next week to discuss strategy.

Opposition officials, who insisted on anonymity, said various factions in the movement want to expand the leadership to make it more representative of the Iraq's ethnically diverse society.

France, Britain set up joint air command

CHARTERS, France (AFP) — France and Britain announced Friday they were setting up a new joint air command to coordinate bilateral action in trouble spots around the world, but said the move posed no threat to North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) solidarity.

The initiative came amid increasing open splits between Europe and the United States over how to resolve the war in Bosnia after the U.S. decision to stop supporting U.N. sanctions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"The new group will allow us to coordinate our air forces so that we can set up more speedily combined operations in humanitarian or peacekeeping missions," British Prime Minister John Major said.

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(Continued on page 12)

House finance panel chairman welcomes customs duty cuts

AMMAN (Petri) — Deputy Ali Abul Ragheb, chairman of the Financial Committee of the Lower House of Parliament, said Friday the government's recent decision to reduce customs duties on cars and more than 300 other items were intended to address deformities in the Jordanian economy.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Abul Ragheb said the decision, which was taken Nov. 12, runs in conformity with the requirements of the new stage during which Jordan will have to become a modern country enjoying a sound investment climate.

Noting that the decision was taken to address several problems as recession and tax evasion, Mr. Abul Ragheb said the reductions in customs duties, which included, in addition to passenger vehicles, foodstuff, clothing, furnishings, mineral water, marble and building material were approved by the Cabinet in accordance with an agreement signed between

the government and the International Monetary Fund and to meet conditions for joining the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The government's decision cuts 27 to 44 per cent in customs duties on imported passenger vehicles and offers total exemptions for cargo transport vehicles.

Jordan, Mr. Abul Ragheb was about to start an economic development process which requires that it takes its position in the region as a civilised state, adding that this calls for taking new economic measures.

He underlined that the decision has no bearing on the value of the Jordanian dinar and the Kingdom's reserves of foreign currencies because the margin of reductions in prices was not big and that the demand for items included in the decision will not much influence the revenues of the treasury in a negative way.

Jordanian citizens "deal with the issue in a rational manner and the Central Bank of Jordan has enough hard currency reserves," he said.

"The treasury's revenues will increase and will be positively affected by the decision to reduce prices," said Mr. Abul Ragheb.

Furthermore, he said, the reasons for increasing customs duties on imported goods no more exist, thus calling for bringing things back to normal and starting a gradual reduction of customs duties.

He also called for further reductions in customs duties to enable citizens with medium income to benefit from these decisions. At the same time he urged the government to protect national industries.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said high prices of imported items were a main factor in the rise of tax evasion cases taking various forms, either as bringing goods into the Kingdom under the guise of temporary imports or through smuggling.

Israeli woman's body found in grove

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — An elderly Israeli woman was found clubbed and stabbed to death Friday in an orchard bordering on the West Bank. Police initially suspected she was killed by Palestinians since a note written in Arabic and left on the body said Islamic militants took responsibility for the murder. But as the investigation progressed criminal motives were suspected and police detained the woman's son for questioning. The victim, IDA Storkovitz, 85, was found by her son in an orchard near the Hadarim neighbourhood of Kfar Saba, Tel Aviv suburb bordering on the West Bank town of Kalkilyah, police said. He had launched searches after she failed to return home from a visit to a friend's house. Police believe she was killed Thursday evening. Twelve Palestinians working in the area were detained for questioning, police said. They were later released. Eric Bar-Chen, a police spokesman, said initially there was a "probable terrorist background" to the slaying, but that criminal motives were also being strongly investigated.

Price: Jordan 150 fils

13 killed, 200 wounded in PNA-Hamas clash in Gaza

Violent confrontation fuels fears of Palestinian civil war

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Home & Middle East News

U.N. troops prepared to fight their way out of Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — U.N. troops in this lawless Somali capital are preparing to fight their way out if necessary their mandate expires at the end of March.

"I think it is clear the factions will fight for control of the port and the airport" where U.N. troops are stationed, said one senior U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Soldiers also said they deemed it likely that they would have to defend themselves as they left, with armed Somalis probably trying to loot U.N. equipment as well as fighting each other for control of key points.

Plans are being drawn up to have troops from NATO countries such as the United States, France and Italy cover the withdrawal of the last of the 15,000 U.N. soldiers still here, U.N. officials said.

The Departure of the "Blue Helmets" follows the failure of Somalia's two principal warlords, General Mohammad Farah Aideed and self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad, to agree on a government of national unity.

U.N. Special Representative Victor Ghebo of Ghana said in an interview earlier this week that he expected "reality to dawn" on both men with an agreement to set up a unified government before the U.N. force departed, but added that "I wouldn't like to put a penny on any bet on what happens on April 1."

Mr. Ghebo said the withdrawal support force would be mainly amphibious, with landing ships carrying tanks lying offshore, and with weaponry force capable of destroying any tanks being used by the Somali factions. The force would strike only if the departing troops came under attack, he said, adding that he expected at least one aircraft carrier.

Other officials said the United States had been asked to provide a marine amphibious force, and that helicopters

gunships would hover overhead as the last troops left.

General Aboor Samar Bakar, the Malaysian commander of the U.N. force, told AFP that he himself would be the last soldier to leave Mogadishu.

Both the port and airport are in Aideed territory in south Mogadishu, but access to both can be blocked by militias loyal to Mr. Ali Mahdi, who holds the north of the capital.

Gen. Aideed and Mr. Ali Mahdi are still in deadlock. Contacts between the two sides continue, but the most recent ended in "total disagreement," Mr. Ali Mahdi in an interview Wednesday, accusing Gen. Aideed of "megalomania" and "obstinacy."

"We have been trying until now to break the impasse," Ghebo said, "but at the weekend we became clear the SNA (Aideed's Somali National Alliance) was not prepared to accept suggestion from the SSA (Ali Mahdi's Somali Salvation Alliance). So the impasse continues."

Clan leaders supporting Gen. Aideed pledged Sunday that they would cooperate to enforce safety to enable the U.N. force to leave in an orderly and safe manner, but warned that the presence of support troops could open an untended progression of troops in and out of Somalia.

Mr. Ghebo retorted in the interview that the clan leaders were in no position to object to U.N. safety measures, adding that "the Security Council is not infusing another U.N. force into Somalia."

The U.N. soldiers will be leaving behind an 8,500-strong Somali police force they have trained and thousands of civilians now working for the United Nations and its contractors. They will also hand over to elders or regional authorities the keys to the jails they have set up.

In his remarks to the Ottawa Sun, Maj. Armstrong stated categorically that officers wanted to get rid of the photographs taken at the village of Belet Huen.

The United Nations will pay the police "up to the day we leave, but there is no question of any payment beyond

that," Mr. Ghebo said, acknowledging that both police and civilian staff could "turn into bandits."

The U.N. force has already had trouble with Somali employees, officials said.

Mr. Ghebo said U.N. personnel would be careful not to hand over jail keys to the wrong people because "that would be an invitation to slaughter the prisoners like sheep."

Canada to probe charges

Canadian Defence Minister David Collenette set up a public inquiry Thursday into allegations that Canadian soldiers serving in the U.N. mission brutally tortured young Somalis.

The announcement came one day after a Canadian military doctor who served in the U.N. mission in March 1993 told a newspaper that senior officers had ordered the destruction of photographs showing soldiers torturing Somalis.

But they declared they would resist efforts by militias to extract protection payments and would insist that local Somali leaders ensure security for rehabilitation and medical projects and their international and national staff.

Speaking on behalf of organisations working in Somalia and currently in conference in Geneva, Richard McCall of the United States USAID body told reporters: "We can't say if UNOSOM is leaving, we are leaving: we are not."

Pierce Gerey, of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), said his organisation intended "to continue our programmes and promote immunisation, health care, nutrition and basic education for Somali children and families."

They spoke at a news conference during a session of the Somalia AID Coordination Body (SACB) which links donor countries, U.N. agencies and non-governmental organisations promoting reconstruction in the African state.

In an interview this week, SACB Standing Committee Chairman Sigurd Iling said

Over recent weeks, some groups with projects in Somalia



FLOODS IN GAZA: Palestinian residents try Gaza City as bad weather continued in the to save their cars in the overflooded streets of region Thursday (AFP photo)

Aid groups to stay in Somalia

GENEVA (R) — United Nations, governmental and independent aid organisations said on Thursday they were determined to maintain operations in conflict-torn Somalia despite a withdrawal next March by the U.N. peacekeeping force UNOSOM.

But they declared they would resist efforts by militias to extract protection payments and would insist that local Somali leaders ensure security for rehabilitation and medical projects and their international and national staff.

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he saw the best hope for the future of the country — where tens of thousands died in a famine in 1991 and 1992 — in the emergence of a regional-based federation.

Power in Mogadishu, the capital, is disputed between warlords Mohammad Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohammad. But Mr. Iling, the European Union's Kenya-based envoy to Somalia, said many Somalis were opposed to recreating a centralised state.

Mr. McCall told Thursday's news conference it was "time to give the Somalis room to reach their own decisions and solutions. "No framework could be imposed from the outside through setting deadlines for negotiations.

"I think is a mistake to assume that in a certain time period you're going to get a certain result," he declared.

When the U.N. peacekeeping effort was launched in December 1992 with the arrival of U.S. forces, the aim was to achieve the establishment of a new government within 18 months.

But that aim was frustrated by fierce clan fighting in Mogadishu and other cities. Some diplomats who follow Somali affairs say the U.N. is still placing too much emphasis on getting accord between the faction leaders in the capital.

In the water resources group, the official reported that Oman has plans to create a regional desalination research centre in Muscat and that Israel has also identified specific sites for an Israeli-led project on rehabilitating municipal water supply systems.

A regional water data bank, supported financially by the United States and Canada, has also been endorsed by this multilateral group at their Athens meeting last month.

The arms control and regional security group, he continued, will be working at its next plenary session in Tunis next month on "a major region-wide declaration" on arms control and regional security.

"Significant progress has been made and it will be a positive statement," the briefer said.

Other issues to be taken up in Tunis include the establishment of a regional centre for conflict prevention and regional security, and cooperation on search and rescue at sea.

Israel, Palestinian nerves fray over police march

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Thursday accused each other of not being committed to peace in a row over Palestinian police who shouted their claim to cities deep inside the Jewish state in a military-style ceremony.

Israel complained to the Palestinian self-rule authority over the incident, the latest to fray nerves on both sides. Palestinian leaders countered charged that Israel was blowing the incident out of all proportion.

The row blew up two days after PLO leader Yasser Arafat, in what appeared to be a slip of the tongue, publicly referred to "the Israeli enemy" in a speech in Gaza commemorating Palestinian independence day.

A spokesman said the Israeli army formally complained to the Palestinian self-rule authority in Gaza and Jericho about the police ceremony.

At the parade ground, the crowd applauded Jawad Shahwan, a former activist in Mr. Arafat's Fatah group, as he gave a martial arts demonstration. Israel television the next day showed scores of police in military fatigues.

Witnesses said they chanted the names of Haifa and Beit Shean, cities inside Israel.

Jibril Rajoub, head of Mr. Arafat's secret police in the West Bank, said in an interview on Israeli television: "I think to make a story of that is not good will on the part of the media in Israel."

"People will sing. What is this? It's all that bothersome that a man says Ashdod or doesn't say Haifa?" he added.

For Israelis, the scene vividly evoked fears the PLO was not really committed to accepting the existence of Israel, as agreed in last year's peace treaty, but dreamed one day of recovering all of Palestine.

Another cause of irritation came on Thursday when

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin linked Palestinian elections to the PLO carrying out its commitment to alter parts of its charter calling for the destruction of Israel.

Palestinian leaders accused Israel of delaying elections, the next major step in the peace agreement, out of an unwillingness to implement a pledged troop redeployment in the West Bank by the eve of balloting.

Israel and the PLO recognised each other last year when they made peace, but for many on both sides the memory of decades of fighting remains powerful. Each side keenly watches the other for signs of the old hostility.

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Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, an Israeli peace negotiator, said the accord with the PLO stipulated Palestinians must submit the name of every policeman for vetting by Israel.

"If we have objections, he cannot enlist. It is perfectly clear that as long as there are violators and they are not rectified, it is impossible to continue," Mr. Sarid told Israel radio, referring to further peace moves.

Ahmad Tibi, an Arab-Israeli adviser to Mr. Arafat, said Israelis hostile to peace were exaggerating incidents to destroy confidence in the peace agreement.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish vote scheduled for Dec. 4 postponed

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish electoral authorities have postponed partial legislative elections on Dec. 4 after the high court overruled a law denying the right to vote to residents of the southeast who have been forced to leave their village because of the Kurdish rebellion. The head of the electoral council, Ohran Yavuz, said Thursday the vote was postponed to allow parliament time to work out new legislation.

The elections are for 22 vacant parliamentary seats, 15 of them in the southeast, where Kurdish separatists and Turkish security forces are locked in a bitter bloody struggle. Ninety-three deputies from different parties had asked the constitutional court to strike down the legislation. The pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party announced earlier this month that it would boycott the elections, fearing they would not be democratically organised.

Israelis to teach security in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — In the wake of two deadly bombing attacks in Buenos Aires, Israeli security experts will give classes on protection of potential targets, an Israeli embassy official said Thursday. The private, Tel Aviv-based Professional School of Security has been authorised by the Israeli defence Ministry to open a training school in Buenos Aires, a spokesperson for Israeli Military Attaché Meir Zamir told the Associated Press. Neither the embassy nor the ministry will be involved with the school, the spokesperson said in a phone interview. On July 17, a bomb destroyed the seven-story building of Argentina's main Jewish community centre, killing 95 people. In March 1992, another bomb razed the Israeli embassy, killing 28. Investigations have proved inconclusive and no one has been convicted for either crime, although authorities have blamed Middle East-based groups.

Assad's son appointed tank commander

DAMASCUS (AP) — The son of Syrian President Hafez al-Assad was Thursday appointed commander of tank battalion in the Syrian army, the official news agency SANA reported. Captain Bassel Al Assad was promoted during a ceremony at Homs in northern Syria attended by General Mustapha Tlass, Syrian defence minister. Bashar Al Assad, 28, was pushed into the limelight following the death of his elder brother Bassel, who was being groomed for the succession, in an automobile accident last January. In a speech shortly after his brother's death, Bashar pledged to continue working "for the dignity and honour of the country."

Washington upbeat about Mideast peace process

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Two State Department officials gave an upbeat assessment Wednesday of the ongoing Middle East peace process in the wake of President Clinton's historic Mideast tour earlier this month and the results of the recent Casablanca economic summit which was attended by Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The two spoke on background at the Foreign Press Centre, requesting that they be identified as "State Department officials." Their briefing covered the Middle East peace process, the economic summit conference in Morocco earlier this month, and U.S. assistance to the Palestinian Authority, now in control of the self-rule areas in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

At U.S. urging, one of the officials reported, the donors who have pledged but have not fully paid their share of the \$2.4 billion last year to help the fledgling Palestinian Authority will be meeting in Brussels on Nov. 29 to consider the whole issue of start-up funds.

"We spent some time in recent weeks working with the Palestinians to develop an agreed-upon budget which could be presented to the donors and which would identify a gap that the donors

would then be prepared to fund," he explained. "We hope to have the donors come together and pledge new assistance in order to meet this gap on start-up costs," he said.

In reply to a question on the donors' reported concern over the Authority's lack of "transparency and accountability," he said the United States has worked hard with the World Bank and the Palestinians on setting up "mechanisms of transfer that we feel meet these standards of transparency and accountability."

The briefing Wednesday came on the eve of the visit here of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who will be meeting with President Clinton and Congressional leaders next week following the Republican Party's sweep of this month's national elections, which resulted in their control of the two U.S. legislatures for the first time in decades.

The officials pointed to "extremely encouraging strides" in the peace process and the multilateral tracks, which involve delegations from several Arab countries, Israel, Europe, Japan, Russia and the United States.

They said there have been "very significant achievements" both on the human and psychological levels in

Asking for a second opinion, the basic message coming from Casablanca, one of the officials said, was that the Middle East was now open for business since "the political problems which have prevented regional interaction are beginning to go away."

He added that "in the coming months" a follow up meeting of experts will look into the conference's agreement "to examine the idea of

The remainder, \$25 million, was allocated for pro-

jects initiated by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). This U.S. government agency has subsequently been instrumental in launching nine projects by private investors representing a capital investment of \$100 million with the potential of generating 5,000 jobs in the Palestinian areas.

Turning to the activities of the five multilateral working groups, the other official pointed out that their significance lay in their "tearing down some of the psychological and political barriers" between Arabs and Israelis; consequently precipitating "meetings in corners of rooms between people in the same field — hydrologists, environmentalists, scientists, arms control experts."

As the Bahrain meeting last month of the multilateral environmental group, he reported, a non-binding agreement was reached on "a code of conduct" for the Middle East, the first such code that has been agreed to anywhere in the region.

This group is now working on contingency arrangements dealing with oil spills, particularly in the Gulf of Aqaba; desertification, and waste water treatment.

Bahrain, he said, will be shortly holding a meeting to establish a regional environment-

mental centre there, and Jordan wants to follow suit.

The United States will be leading a team to Cairo focusing on environmental health and pesticides, he added.

In the water resources group, the official reported that Oman has plans to create a regional desalination research centre in Muscat and that Israel has also identified specific sites for an Israeli-led project on rehabilitating municipal water supply systems.

A regional water data bank, supported financially by the United States and Canada, has also been endorsed by this multilateral group at their Athens meeting last month.

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Other issues to be taken up in Tunis include the establishment of a regional centre for conflict prevention and regional security, and cooperation on search and rescue at sea.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defense Department 661111
Civil Defense Immediate 630341

Civil Defense Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

House condemns partitioning of Ibrahim Mosque

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament issued a statement condemning Israel's partitioning of Al Ibrahim Mosque, in the occupied city of Hebron on the West Bank, as a flagrant aggression on the rights of Arabs and Muslims.

The statement, issued Thursday, said that the Israeli move contradicted the provisions of the peace process which is supposed to bring about stability and security and restore legitimate rights to their lawful owners.

The Israelis reopened the mosque of Nov. 7, nine months after a Jewish settler machinedgued more than 30 Muslims as they knelt in prayer.

The Israeli authorities have assigned separate sections for Jews and Muslims, and tightened security around and inside the shrine.

The Parliament statement said that the Jews have no right at all to pray in the mosque and their presence there is a major obstacle in the path of restoring peace and security.

The partitioning of the mosque, one of the holiest places for Muslims, has angered all Muslims who never faced any problem in exercising their full rights at the mosque even under the British Mandate, said the statement.

It said that the encroachment on Al Ibrahim Mosque was a sacrilege brought to the Islamic holy places and encouraged the Jewish settlers around Hebron to seize Arab homes and other property in the city and force the Arab population to leave.

The statement considered the partitioning of the mosque as a reward by the government of Israel to the Jewish settlers for their crime against the Muslim worshippers and could serve as a precedent for Jewish seizures of other holy sites in Palestine.

The statement called on the Arab states and Muslim nations to end their differences and join hands in foiling attempts on their holy places.

It urged Arab and Muslim leaders to exercise all forms of pressure on the Israeli government to rescind its measures for the Ibrahim Mosque.

Jordan takes part in London exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Mohammad Adwan, Minister of tourism and antiquities, visited the Jordanian stand at the World Travel Market exhibition which was held in London between Nov. 14-17.

The WTM exhibition is considered one of the most important tourism exhibitions in Europe where over 5,500 organisations from 160 countries participate. The WTM is visited by 1,800 media representatives and 45,000 tourism and travel specialists.

Jordan's participation which started in 1980, aims at introducing and promoting the Kingdom's touristic attractions. The Jordanian stand has been organised by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in cooperation with the Royal Jordanian airline and a number of representatives from the tourism private sector in Jordan.

The Jordanian stand was visited by a very large number of people.

Dr. Adwan visited a number of Arab countries' stands as well as the Israeli stand. The Royal Jordanian folklore troupe has contributed to attracting visitors to the Jordanian stand.



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Princess Ghida, the King's Cultural Advisor attended a concert by the Colonne Choral troupe, held at the Royal Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad and senior Cultural Centre to mark the King's birthday. Also attending the concert, which was organised by the Ministry of Culture, were prime minister Abdul Salam Al Jumaa; Minister of Culture Jumaa; Hamman presented King Hussein a symbolic gift and the troupe director Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid occasion.

JEA, JICA train Palestinian engineers

AMMAN (J.T.) — In recogni-

tion of the importance of granting technical assistance to the Palestinian people, Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), with support from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has started a training course for Palestinian engineers in the field of electric power.

The course, the first of its kind in Jordan, was especially designed by JEA and JICA for the Palestinian engineers. The training aims at providing the 20 participants with essential knowledge and techniques regarding con-

struction and maintenance of the distribution networks of the electric power, which will be the basic infrastructure in the autonomous region.

The lectures and practical work will be given and supervised by the JEA officials. The course will last until March 1995, and accommodation will be provided to all the engineers. The Japanese government, through JICA, bears the cost of \$160,000 for this programme.

The realisation of this assistance from Japan stems from Japan's firm support for

the development in this region, especially in the new era of peace, the Japanese embassy said in a statement. Japan has so far offered a number of technical cooperation programmes to Jordan, amounting to over \$70 million. For 1993 alone, technical cooperation projects from Japan to Jordan reached about \$8 million.

The opening ceremony was held at the JEA headquarters on Nov. 17 and was attended by Talal Ureigat, minister of energy and mineral resources and Yuji Ikeda, ambassador of Japan.

Police searching for Shihan attackers

By Rana Huseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — City police are searching for assailants who reportedly attacked the Shihan newspaper building early Thursday morning and threw a brick at a 26-year-old man who was guarding the newspaper premises, police sources said.

According to a witness, who also guards the newspaper and was present at the time, police questioned witnesses and investigated the scene, that police discovered four Molotov cocktails hidden in different areas of the two-storey building. None of the bombs went off, he added.

He told the Jordan Times Thursday evening that his colleague Mansour Ma'aytah, who was working at the time of the attack, was hit in the back of his head by a brick "apparently thrown by one of the in-

truders."

He said that two intruders climbed the roof of the building. One of them threw the brick, while few more standing at the entrance of the newspaper.

"After he was hit with the brick, Mansour (the guard) managed to reach his gun and fired several shots in the air to scare the perpetrators off; upon hearing the gun shots they fled the scene," said the 50-year-old man.

According to a reporter who works for the newspaper, he recognised one of the attackers involved in the incident.

Meanwhile, a reporter who works for the Shihan newspaper said the guard told police that he recognised one of the attackers involved in the incident.

According to the reporter, who preferred not to be identified, the guard told police that he had recognised one of his clients as he did not leave room for two consecutive days.

He said he went with one of his employees to check on the man. When the man did not answer the knock on the door, the reporter said, the hotel owner knocked the door down and found the man slumped over the table.

Police officials were unavailable Friday evening for comment on the incident.

Man found dead in hotel room

In a separate incident, police are investigating the mysterious death of a 32-year-old man who was

found dead Thursday in a hotel room in the town of Amman, according to a police report.

According to the report, the owner of the hotel told police that he had become worried about one of his clients as he did not leave room for two consecutive days.

He said he went with one of his employees to check on the man. When the man did not answer the knock on the door, the reporter said, the hotel owner knocked the door down and found the man slumped over the table.

The forensic exam estimated the death had occurred 36 hours before. The body was transferred to Al Bashir Hospital for autopsy.

The report did not mention the name of the victim or the hotel, but said that police are investigating the incident.

First tomato consignment to leave for Israel this week

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first consignment of Jordanian tomatoes will head for Israel Sunday or Monday after an agreement has been reached on a \$2 per kilogramme price, the head of the Jordan Agricultural Marketing Corporation (JAMCO), Salem Al lawzi, said Friday.

Mr. Lawzi, said JAMCO, a government agency, was not formally involved in the negotiations between the exporters and importer but he was told "unofficially" that an agreement was reached on the price.

"I expect the first consignment to leave Jordan on Sunday or Monday," Mr. Lawzi told the Jordan Times, adding that he did not have further details.

It will be the first Jordanian exports to Israel. The two countries signed a peace treaty on Oct. 26 and the treaty was fully formalised and ratified on Nov. 10, clearing the way for diplomatic relations and economic cooperation including trade ties.

Israel turned to Jordan for its needs of tomatoes this month after imposing a ban on produce from its traditional sources in the Gaza Strip, citing a cholera outbreak there. The ban led to serious shortages of tomatoes in Israel since the

Israeli production had also fallen following a drop in prices several months ago.

JAMCO, whose role is limited to issuing permissions for produce exports and ensuring that the quality and specifications of the exported products are compatible with those sought by the importer, has issued permissions for 800 tonnes of tomato exports to Israel.

But no shipment has been made because of disagreements over prices.

The Israelis are seeking

three distinct qualities of tomatoes: medium, large and extra large — more in line with European standards — and in new cartons, as opposed to the traditional polystyrene and old wood boxes by Jordanian exporters.

These demands will definitely increase the price" to higher than the prices that Jordanian exporters offer to their regular markets in the Gulf states where the specifications are not so rigid, said Bashir Badawi, a produce exporter from the Jordan Valley.

Mr. Badawi echoed Mr. Lawzi's comments that the specifications that Israelis have set would definitely push prices higher. "I think the actual cost price could go up to \$2; so what is the point in trying to sell to the Israelis while we are assured of our cost plus profit in the Gulf markets?"

summer peak season exceeds 4,000 tonnes per day, dropping to around 1,000 tonnes in winter season.

This explains the low prices in summer and the high prices in winter.

However, haphazard exports without proper quality controls now — when the market has largely medium and low-quality tomatoes — could set back hopes for large Israeli import orders in the summer.

The shortage of tomatoes has shot up prices in Israel to nearly \$3 per kilogramme and prompted a Gallup poll on the market trend.

The poll, whose results were published by the Jerusalem Post, found that 19 per cent of the public had stopped buying tomatoes because of the high price and another 25 per cent had significantly cut their consumption.

Only 25 per cent of the 350 Israelis polled said they were continuing to buy tomatoes as usual.

Israel radio reported that 90 per cent of the over 2,000 people responding to a call-in survey said they would be willing to abstain from consuming tomatoes until the price drops.

Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has appealed to Israelis to fight inflation and stop buying tomatoes to stem the increase in price.

JPA proposes new law to keep pace with current development

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Suleiman Qudah said in a statement Friday that the time has come for the government to reconsider the existing JPA law, especially as the country is now living under a democracy requiring more flexible rules and because the old law has numerous loopholes and gaps.

Furthermore, new laws like the Press and Publication Law and the Political Parties Law which are now in force have direct impact on the JPA, noted Mr. Qudah.

Noting that the JPA has been in existence since 1963, but many developments have occurred at the political and other levels, justifying the enactment of a new legislation capable of catering to the new developments and enabling the JPA to act more effectively, said Mr. Qudah.

Mr. Qudah was speaking before the start of a debate on a JPA draft law by the Legal Committee of the Lower

House of Parliament, to start on Sunday.

He said the time has come for the government and Parliament to reconsider the existing JPA law, especially as the country is now living under a democracy requiring more flexible rules and because the old law has numerous loopholes and gaps.

He said another proposal concerns the settlement of issues related to political parties' newspapers and a third concerns JPA rights to handle issues pertaining to journalists and the institutions employing them.

He said the JPA hopes that the new draft law would grant the journalists more freedom of expression under democracy and help promote their profession.



BIDDING FAREWELL: Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein and Princess Rania Al Abdullah Thursday bid farewell to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan upon his departure for London at the beginning of a three-nation tour which will take him to Belgium, Austria and Britain, the first leg of his tour. The Crown Prince is accompanied

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Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sabella welcome:

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Professor Kensuke Harada
Professor and Chairman, Department of Paediatrics

Professor Hideki Mugishima
Assistant professor and director, Department of paediatrics, paediatric hematology/oncology.

and wish them a happy stay in Jordan. Mr. and Mrs. Sabella also congratulate the visiting professors on signing a cooperation agreement between Nihon University, School of Medicine, and the University of Jordan. They also thank Mr. Y. Nakagawa, Tokyo Manager of Singer Nikko Co. Ltd., Japan, for his extraordinary efforts to ensure the project's success. Thanks are also due to Mr. Husam Bazrafsh from the Jordanian Embassy in Tokyo for his valuable support of the project.

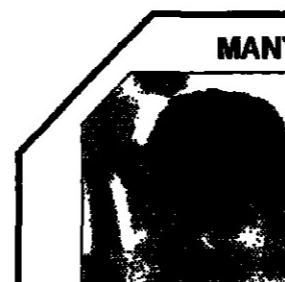
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Joel in life

Ireland plunged into political void

DUBLIN (AFP) — Ireland was plunged into political limbo Friday as Albert Reynolds, who abruptly resigned as prime minister Thursday, clung to the leadership of his Fianna Fail Party, muddling the race to succeed him.

Mr. Reynolds, forced out in a bitter row with Labour partners in his two-year-old coalition, had been expected to step down as party leader shortly after handing his resignation to President Mary Robinson.

But at a meeting of Fianna Fail's parliamentary team late Thursday, he failed to do so, and, although he promised to resign, will still be at the helm when the party meets Saturday to choose a new leader.

The parliamentary team meeting adjourned with the news, hours after Mr. Reynolds' resignation, that High Court President Harry

Whelehan had also quit. It was Mr. Reynolds' controversial appointment of Judge Whelehan a week earlier that sparked the conflict that brought down the government.

Observers said Mr. Reynolds, in stalling his resignation as party leader, might have been making a late bid to sway the succession, shaping up as a race between Justice Minister Maire Geoghegan-Quinn and Finance Minister Bertie Ahern.

Mr. Ahern, 43, popular former mayor of Dublin, was considered the front-runner, his Dublin base seen by observers as a potential asset that could help Fianna Fail recapture lost electoral ground in the capital.

Ms. Geoghegan-Quinn's main disadvantage was seen as her perceived proximity to Mr. Reynolds and to the row that forced him out.

She was Judge Whelehan's boss when, as attorney general, he dragged his feet for seven months in extraditing a Catholic priest charged with, and subsequently convicted of, sexually molesting children in Northern Ireland.

It was that long delay — rumoured to have been influenced by the church — that enraged Labour, whose six ministers — led by Foreign Minister Dick Spring — walked out of the coalition and set the stage for Mr. Reynolds' resignation.

This week, as the power struggle peaked and Mr. Reynolds' position grew increasingly untenable, Ms. Geoghegan-Quinn offered to resign, but Mr. Reynolds declined.

Mr. Spring meanwhile emerged as a key player in the fall of Mr. Reynolds' government. Participation of his party was seen as an indispensable element in any

succeeding coalition. Any successor to Mr. Reynolds as head of Fianna Fail was expected to try to patch up relations with Labour in a bid to restore the coalition government.

But Labour have already had initial talks with John Bruton, leader of the Fine Gael opposition party, about the formation of a new alliance.

Should neither of those possibilities work out, general elections would have to be held, possibly before Christmas.

Mr. Reynolds, in announcing his resignation, pointedly said he would not ask Mrs. Robinson to dissolve parliament, an option that would have made elections within three weeks a certainty.

The course he took left the president with the prerogative of asking the former partners to try to form another coalition.



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (left) invites Mr. Aliyev in Moscow on an official visit. Azerbaijan leader Geydar Aliyev to start their talks. (AFP photo)

Karabakh tripartite summit agreed

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The presidents of Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia have agreed to hold a tripartite summit to settle the deadly conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Azerbaijani embassy said Friday.

An embassy spokesman gave no date or venue for the summit, to be attended by Presidents Boris Yeltsin of Russia, Geydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Armenia's Levon Ter-Petrosian.

He said the agreement to hold the summit was reached at talks between Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Aliyev in Moscow Thursday and that preparations had begun to hold the meeting "soon." The Russian president's office would not confirm or deny the report.

In a separate report from Geneva, diplomatic sources said a high-level meeting on the disputed enclave would be held in December in the Swiss city. They said the heads of state of Armenia and Azerbaijan would attend along with U.N. chief Boutros Ghali and Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev.

More than 20,000 people have died in fighting since

1988 over the largely-Armenian populated enclave in western Azerbaijan.

Dr. Ghali held talks about the dispute this month with both Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Ter-Petrosian as well as with Mr. Yeltsin.

On Thursday the Russian and Azerbaijani presidents met to discuss the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the future of oilfields in the Caspian Sea.

The talks focused on ways to bring a political solution to the bitter seven year conflict over Karabakh, a predominantly Armenian enclave which has announced its independence from Azerbaijan. Mr. Yeltsin's press office said.

The office said Mr. Aliyev thanked Moscow for helping to settle a conflict which claimed thousands of lives.

Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Ter-Petrosian met for initial talks in Moscow in September.

Fighting effectively stopped in Karabakh after Moscow brokered a ceasefire which came into force in May. But there is still no firm political agreement between the conflicting parties.

group of mainly Western oil firms. Only one Russian company, Lukoil, was part of the consortium.

The deal, signed on Sept. 20, triggered objections from the Russian Foreign Ministry, which said no single country had jurisdiction over resources in the Caspian Sea.

A special commission has been set up to coordinate activities by the five littoral states — Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran.

Mr. Yeltsin also urged Mr. Aliyev to press for a political deal with Karabakh authorities and neighbouring Armenia, Karabakh's main supporter, the Russian leader's press office said.

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Woman pronounced dead, isn't

ALBANY, New York (R) — An 86-year-old woman was pronounced dead, placed in a body bag and packed in a morgue cooler for 90 minutes before someone realised she was still alive, local media reported. A morgue supervisor, retrieving the body of Mildred Clarke Wednesday for a funeral home, noticed her stomach moving and realised she was breathing, Albany County Coroner Philip Furie told an Albany, New York, television station. She had been examined by Fire Department rescue squad members and pronounced dead by the coroner. The Albany Times Union newspaper reported. Ms. Clarke was conscious and listed in serious condition Thursday at the Albany Medical Centre. "She certainly appeared as if she had expired," the coroner was quoted as saying in the newspaper. "She was cold as ice and she was stiff." Her body had been placed in the hospital morgue cooler, normally set at 40 degrees Fahrenheit. (4 degrees Celsius), the coroner told the media. Ms. Clarke is a widow who has lived at a senior citizen apartment complex for 15 years, local reports said. Albany County does not require its coroners to be licensed physicians. Mr. Furie, an insurance salesman, was elected to his post.

Whitney Houston hounded by bad press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — First came a refusal to answer to questions at news conferences and photo opportunities. Then there was a report of ill behaviour toward hotel staff. Now South African media are looking for any reason to denounce pop superstar Whitney Houston despite two packed concerts that had tens of thousands of fans — black and white — dancing and cheering. A third show in Cape Town Saturday also promises to draw a large crowd, despite ticket prices of \$30 and 150 rand (\$8.45 to \$42.25) — more than a day's pay for many blacks. But news reports continue to focus on the negative. The state-owned South African Broadcasting Corp. reported that Ms. Houston refused to visit a dying girl who wished to meet her. Not necessarily so, said Patricia Pinnock, manager of Reach For A Dream, a company that helps fulfill wishes of sick or disadvantaged children. "She didn't exactly refuse to see her," Ms. Pinnock said. "There's still a possibility of a meeting." After the Johannesburg show, which drew more than 70,000 people who appeared delighted with the performance, newspaper and radio reports concentrated on a large number of muggings and robberies that occurred. Ms. Houston's organisers blamed the negative publicity on South Africa's years of isolation due to apartheid. The nation, and particularly the service industry and news media, have little experience dealing with world-class acts that require stringent planning, they said. "South Africa has never experienced a superstar of Whitney's magnitude," said Roxy Meade, spokeswoman for Ms. Houston.

Italy's former communists give out Bible

ROME (R) — Karl Marx, who called religion the opium of the masses, may have been spinning in his grave Wednesday as the newspaper of Italy's former Communists gave out the Bible to help boost L'Unita, which was the organ of the West's largest Marxist party before the fall of communism in 1989, gave its readers the new testament in a paperback volume with purple covers. It was sandwiched in an edition whose lead article offered readers something Marx would have been much more comfortable with — a general strike called for next month to defend workers' rights.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI) cast off Marxism and changed its name to the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) in 1991. It remains Italy's largest leftist political force. Pope John Paul received the newspaper's editor Walter Veltroni in an audience at the Vatican Wednesday and told him he appreciated the initiative. "The values of the Gospel have a perennial significance," the Polish Pope told Mr. Veltroni.

Finnish MPs ratify EU membership

HELSINKI (AFP) — Finland's parliament Friday ratified the country's adhesion to the European Union (EU).

After a marathon debate, parliament voted 152-45 in favour of membership, easily passing the two-thirds majority needed for the ratification.

One MP abstained and one was absent. The speaker does not vote.

Finns voted 56.9 to 43.1 per cent in the advisory referendum Sept. 18 in favour of the country's joining the EU.

The debate in parliament's plenary session lasted some 150 hours in all. It began on Nov. 2 after a lengthy debate in the Foreign Policy Committee.

According to the original

timetable, the ratification was due to take place well before Sweden's referendum on Nov. 13.

But filibustering MP's who opposed Finnish membership managed to delay the ratification, and the third reading of the bill continued Monday, the day after the Swedes also had voted for the membership.

The opponents, led by former foreign minister and former leader of the Centre Party Paavo Vaeyrynen, had hoped they could swing the parliament against the EU if Sweden voted "no."

Vesa Laukkainen, an independent elected as a Christian Party candidate and who made marathon speeches of up to six-and-a-half hours, abstained.

On Thursday evening he tendered his resignation and said he wished to resign from parliamentary functions.

A poll on whether Finland's autonomous Swedish-speaking province of Åland should join the EU will be held Sunday. The ballot is advisory, and the final decision whether to join will be taken by the provincial diet.

The result of the islands, which lie between Finland and neighbouring Sweden, is expected to be a clear "yes" after Sweden's referendum.

Finland is due to join the EU on Jan. 1, with Austria, Sweden and Norway.

Norwegians held their referendum on Nov. 28. The latest public opinion polls indicate that they will vote "no."

Aristide names army chief

PONT-AU-PRINCE (AP) — President Jean-Bertrand Aristide picked his own man to command Haitian troops, attempting to break a sad cycle of national history and to subordinate the soldiers to civilian rule.

Mr. Aristide picked Brig. Gen. Bernardin Poisson, an American-trained career soldier fire-fighting specialist who has never commanded troops in the field.

Mr. Aristide named a police chief earlier in the week. The job remains of training a professional police force, separate from the army, and reducing the armed forces to about 1,500 soldiers.

Multinational police advisers have helped cult a 700-member interim police force from the army to be replaced by graduates from a police academy that starts classes in January.

Mr. Aristide has said he wants to instill "the respect for life" in the army and police force.

Gen. Poisson, 46, had been considered the front-runner for the post since his promotion from colonel on Oct. 18 by interim army chief Gen. Jean-Claude Duperval.

Fire chief since 1988 until his promotion, Brig. Poisson is considered a technocrat with no political connections.

Mr. Aristide, overthrown in a military coup in September 1991 led by Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, his previous hand-picked army chief, returned from exile on Oct. 15 with the aid of thousands of American troops.

Under the agreement engineered by the U.S. military, Gen. Duperval became the interim army chief during the transition from military to civilian rule.

The preferred holiday destination for both Tsars and Communist leaders, Crimea was given broad autonomy by post-Soviet Ukraine's new leaders in a bid to staunch pro-Russian sentiment.

Ukraine makes punitive move against Crimea

KIEV (R) — Ukraine took a first punitive measure against its pro-Russian Crimean peninsula Thursday by rescinding a long list of its laws, but kept tougher action in reserve to keep its separatist politicians in line.

Parliament's three-member extreme nationalist faction suggested dispatching troops to make Crimea toe the line.

Parliament may have acted cautiously to prevent stirring up passions ahead of President Leonid Kuchma's trip to the United States starting Saturday.

Deputies may also have wanted to avoid antagonising Moscow as Russia and Ukraine move slowly towards concluding a long overdue friendship treaty.

Crimea was run by Russia from the late 18th century until 1954, when Kremlin leader Nikita Khrushchev gave it to Soviet Ukraine as a "gift." About two-thirds of its 2.7 million residents are ethnic Russians.

The preferred holiday destination for both Tsars and Communist leaders, Crimea was given broad autonomy by post-Soviet Ukraine's new leaders in a bid to staunch pro-Russian sentiment.

Under the agreement engineered by the U.S. military, Gen. Duperval became the interim army chief during the transition from military to civilian rule.

The remaining anarchists left the building after polytechnic officials arranged to bus them out of the area. Overnight, youths had hurled petrol bombs and stones and destroyed three vans owned by private radio stations.

Some smashed windows in stores in the centre of Athens and set vehicles ablaze in a four-hour rampage.

Two people were slightly hurt in the unrest, as some 20 neo-Nazi youths from the organisation Chryssi Avgi (Golden Dawn) clashed with anarchists barricaded within the Polytechnic compound. The demonstrators dispersed shortly before daybreak.

It was the first time neo-Nazi youths had taken part in such unrest in Greece.

The Greek authorities refused to allow police to enter the grounds of the Polytechnic and security forces were limited to lobbing teargas at the demonstrators from outside.

Police had no estimate for the number of demonstrators in the march, which stretched

Indian army chief dies in office

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian army chief Bipin Chandra Joshi, who held key command positions in a 40-year military career, died here Friday after suffering a massive heart attack, the army announced. He was 59 years old.

General Joshi was the first chief of the million-strong army to die while in office. The person to replace him as chief of army staff has yet to be named.

The highly-decorated general complained of shortness of breath and restlessness and was taken to a military hospital at the Delhi Cantonment, an army spokesman said. He died at 11:20 a.m. (0550 GMT).

Gen. Joshi, who had become army chief on July 1, 1993, is survived by his wife, Manjula, and two sons.

President Shankar Dayal Sharma, supreme commander of the armed forces, expressed shock and grief at the

death of Gen. Joshi and praised his contribution to the armed forces.

"The army has lost a frailer chief and the nation a selfless soldier," Gen. Sharma said in a statement issued by the presidential palace.

Gen. Joshi, who was commissioned in 1954 in the armoured corps, has been steering the army through a continuing period of transition following the breakup of the Soviet Union, which was India's premier military ally.

He was director-general of operations at a critical time when the Indian Armed Forces fought Tamil separatist guerrillas in Sri Lanka's northeast in 1987-90.

He commanded an armoured regiment in the 1971 conflict with Pakistan, which resulted in the birth of Bangladesh out of East Pakistan, and served on staff with the United Nations

Emergency Force in Gaza during 1961-62.

Gen. Joshi also served as India's military, naval and air advisor in the South Pacific region in 1973-76, and was concurrently accredited to Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Tonga.

He was a recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal for distinguished service of the most exceptional order.

In a separate development, India's autonomous election commission has censured two cabinet colleagues of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao for attempting to sway voters ahead of key state polls, and said one of them should be sacked.

In two separate statements late Thursday, the commission said the ministers violated a model code of conduct drawn up to prevent politicians in office from influencing voters with sops.

Its arrival on the international drug market (AFP)

Experts calculate its turnover per year in increasingly varied criminal activities at \$45 billion to \$55 billion, with a major portion reinvested in the international financial markets.

Its property holdings are put at \$60 billion. The figures take no account of income from legitimate businesses run by underworld figures.

Organised crime comprises the Cosa Nostra of Sicily with 5,000 members, the Camorra of Campania based on Naples with 7,000 members, the 'Ndrangheta of Calabria with 5,600 members and the Sacra Corona Unita of Apulia with 2,300 members.

Chinese gangs competing in the Romanian capital Bucharest since 1991 have been settling scores of late among themselves, with four corpses found stuffed in suitcases.

Jordan Times

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Looming troubles in Palestine

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER Yitzhak Rabin has upped the ante for the PLO when he declared during his tour of the U.S. that the PLO-Israeli talks on holding Palestinian elections will have to be put on hold until the Palestinian National Council amends the part of its covenant that calls for the destruction of Israel. Israel had in fact raised the issue before but it knew and accepted that the time was not ripe yet to affect the necessary change. The Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, has been waiting for realising significant gains on the road to self-rule before raising the Israeli request before his Palestinian constituency. Arafat must have calculated that on the face of things and in view of slow pace of Israeli-PLO negotiations, he would not be able to muster sufficient support within his organisation to meet Israeli calls for deleting all objectionable references in the charter. The crucial question that arises now is why Rabin has chosen to reactivate this subject at a time when Arafat is beleaguered more than ever before, whether by the mounting challenges from Hamas and Islamic Jihad as well as by the slow pace of international funding for his embryonic Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Recent "slips of the tongue" by several Palestinian officials, including the PLO chairman himself, which referred to Israel as the "enemy," coming on top of the failure of the PLO to deliver the Palestinian people, must have played an important role in Rabin's decision to raise the stakes for the Palestinian leadership. With the deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip yesterday and the lack of positive change in the West Bank, Arafat is ill put to silence the opposition within the Palestinian ranks or amend the PLO charter.

Thus the fault for the deterioration in the Israeli-PLO relations goes both ways. On the one hand Israel has been too slow in its peace talks with the Palestinians depriving them of early peace dividends. On the other hand, the international community which showed considerable generosity on paper to the Palestinians has been procrastinating over the transfer of funds to their empty coffers. This vicious circle may end up causing uncontrolled explosions in the Palestinian territories as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak cautioned Thursday. It seems that unless a higher level of statesmanship surfaces in the PLO-Israeli negotiations, there could be major setbacks for the entire peace process.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

BY PAYING a visit to Qatar on Saturday, Prime Minister 'Abdul Salam Majali opens a new chapter in the relations between Jordan and the Arab Gulf state, said a columnist in Al Ra'i daily. Jordanian-Gulf relations, although strong over the past decades, are in need of stimulation and further bolstering in all domains, and they should be founded on new concepts which aim at safeguarding all parties' interests, said Sultan Al Hantab. The writer said that relations have remained warm with Jordan despite the strain caused by the Gulf crisis because Doha and Amman have always been intent on maintaining brotherly ties and sought mutual respect throughout the past years. Jordan is keen on closing Arab ranks and bolstering inter-Arab relations, bearing in mind the fact that there is a vital need for the Arabs to form their own economic bloc so as to cater to the rapid economic developments around the world and enhance the Arab Nations' economies, said the writer. After ensuring the peace treaty with Israel, which is bound to pave the way for security and stability in the region said the writer, Jordan is now turning its attention towards re-establishing the strongest possible relations with the Arab sister states.

ISSA SHUEIBI, a columnist in Al Dustour, criticised the government's reduction of the customs duty on cars and other commodities as unsatisfactory to the consumers and the merchants alike. The writer said that the reduction in the duty on cars was only marginal, not in favour of the limited income groups. It is the rich and the groups with high income that can still afford to buy the cars and also benefit from the marginal reduction in customs duty, said the writer. On the other hand, the reduction in customs duty has not affected the prices of commodities which are in the merchants' stores, which means all commodities included in the list of items whose customs duty has been reduced would not be affected for long time and the consumers will continue to buy them according to previous tariffs. He said that the government is doing nothing to stem the greed of merchants who tend to benefit through manipulation whenever the prices are affected downwards or upwards. Citing the example of coffee, the writer said that when the world prices shot up, the local merchants raised their prices though they had sufficient amounts of coffee in store, and when the world prices went down the local merchants continued to sell at the former high prices.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Arafat's failure to deliver fuelling conflict in self-rule areas

SIX MONTHS after entering the occupied Gaza Strip and setting up the autonomous government, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is today fighting hard to keep the self-rule on track while not relinquishing his autocratic style of leadership. As far as the Palestinian on the street is concerned, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has failed to deliver, whether in terms of improved living conditions or in asserting Palestinian independence. Anti-peace violence is growing and Mr. Arafat seems to be at a loss how to tread between Israeli pressure to crack down on the hardline groups and his own need to maintain a minimum level of cordiality with the hardliners.

By and large, there is truth in Mr. Arafat's assertions that the delay in receiving international aid could be partly blamed for the rise in Palestinian frustration, thus his demand that funds be directly pumped into the occupied territories is also justified. But then, the problem is quite simple and clear: the style of governance of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has not changed a bit to instil confidence in the World Bank, the coordinator of international aid for the Palestinians, that the funds would be used for the purpose they are intended for in the first place. Indeed, the World Bank could have done better, but the main blame lies on the PNA itself.

Two or three months should have been enough for the self-rule authority to realise that there was something seriously wrong in the way things were going and understand and appreciate that unless it changes its ways and accommodates the international community's need for transparency and accountability the main component of autonomy — financial support — would not be forthcoming.

Even today, months after months of repeated international calls for accountability and transparency, the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) has not done much to meet the conditions of the World Bank. And by the look of things, every day that passes brings in international apathy to the plight of the Palestinians, an apathy that would be translated into refusal to honour the pledges of aid that donor countries made on Oct. 1, 1993, in Washington.

Equally serious is the spiral of violence in the occupied territories, prompting many analysts to conclude that a Palestinian civil war could be in the making if the situation is not addressed, a fact that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres acknowledged recently.

What Mr. Arafat has achieved so far belittles the sacrifices of those Palestinians who gave their lives for something much better than what the PNA president could offer to his constituents today and the anguish of the Palestinian prisoners who underwent physical and psychological torture in Israeli hands to help advance the cause of independence and a dignified life.

One could hear the Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories wondering what the alternatives they have to ensure that the peace process is not undermined and the declaration of principles is implemented. Needless to say some of them have been alienated from the self-rule authority, or more precisely, Mr. Arafat.

Indeed, there are no magic solutions to the problem. But the PLO chairman could help the situation by changing his way of ruling his people. By all accounts, he has tightened his autocratic way of decision-making. The most damaging part of the equation is the fact that senior PNA officials, many of them pragmatic and down to earth, discuss and

M. KAHIL



reach agreements with governments and other external parties and organisations on how to organise things, only to face rejection by the PNA chairman. It is the credibility of those PNA officials that is being eroded as a result. Quite simply, there is no assurance that when a PNA official sits down and negotiates things with anyone that the agreements that are reached will be respected and implemented by his or her own side. As a result, the entire process of developing the economy and politics of the Palestinians is a farce, to say the least.

On the Jordanian-Israeli front, the controversy over Jerusalem appears to have been put to rest after the Kingdom's pledge that it was ready to handover the Islamic holy shrines there to the Palestinians after they secure their territorial and political rights in the occupied territories. But it is naive to think that it was only the issue of Jerusalem that was behind Mr. Arafat's vehement criticism of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty. For one thing, it was clear that the PNA leader was upset that the treaty stole the limelight of the peace process away from the Palestinian scene. Another fear of Mr. Arafat was apparently that the focus of international donors and investors would shift to Jordan from the Palestinian territories.

Well, we cannot hold Mr. Arafat's hand and continue to pacify and comfort him for ever. Jordan had to defend and ensure its own national interests and the peace treaty with Israel is entirely a bilateral issue between the Kingdom and its neighbour. If Mr. Arafat or anyone else gets upset over it, all we can say is, tough luck.

If anything, some of the provisions in the peace treaty

are so carefully drafted that there is not the slightest suggestion, practically or otherwise, that the Kingdom was encroaching upon Palestinian rights or sought to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian rights. Instances are many: Jordan refused to discuss with Israel the Kingdom's borders with Israel, and it excluded the Palestinian share of water in its agreement of water with the Jewish state (why Jordan got only 215 million cubic metres of water while everyone was talking about 377 million cubic metres?). And Jordan also refused to consider the King Hussein Bridge as a point of access between the Kingdom and Israel since the western side of it is Palestinian territory and therefore cannot serve as a crossing between two other sovereign countries without the consent of the Palestinians.

Of course, that does not negate the traditional relationship between the peoples from the two banks of the River Jordan, and hence our concern over the course of the autonomy agreement. We stand to suffer as much as the Palestinians do in the event of things turning worse in the occupied territories.

It is not too late for Mr. Arafat to correct the situation. The starting point, indeed, is shedding his autocratic way of ruling and delegation of authority and responsibility to people who know and can deliver. Then comes closer coordination with the Arab World, starting with Jordan. But coordination should not remain limited to agreements and handshakes. There should be a clear appreciation of the links that bind the two peoples and of Jordanian sincerity when it says it wants Mr. Arafat to achieve success in his endeavours to reach the goal of independence.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israeli aggressive measures responsible for rise of violence in occupied territories

Reviewed By Elias Nasrallah

THE LOCAL Arabic dailies last week gave focus on the developments in the occupied Palestinian lands, the peace process, Iraq and domestic issues.

ARAFAT HIJAZI, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, drew attention to the danger inherent in Israel's partition of the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, saying that the move would undermine the whole peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The writer said that the partition constitutes aggression on the Arabs and Muslims everywhere because the mosque is a sacred shrine for them in general and the Palestinians in particular.

Not sufficing itself with planting Jewish communities inside the Arab city of Hebron, the Israeli government has now taken a very dangerous step in the occupied city by installing a Jewish synagogue in the Muslim shrine, said the writer.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that talking about resistance activities inside the occupied lands as terrorist actions would do Israel any good, nor would the severe measures that the Israelis are imposing on the Arab population following the resistance operations. He said that Israel was exploiting the peace process through perpetuating the occupation of Arab territories, which

has lasted for 27 years so far and is committing practices that are not conducive to peace and stability. Only by ending the occupation and the presence of Jewish settlements can resistance operations end, and peace be established, he added.

Taher Al Adwan, said that the Jihad Al Islami's latest resistance operation in Gaza was a natural reaction to the killing by Israeli agents of one of the Jihad Al Islami's prominent figures, Hani Abed. The writer in Al Dustour said that Israel had earlier announced that it was plotting to get rid of the Islamists leaders and it was natural for the Islamist groups to conclude that it was Israeli agents who murdered Mr. Abed. Under the Oslo agreement, said the writer, Israel has pledged to end Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip but as the settlers stayed there, the resistance groups have the right to pursue their activities. Should the Israelis persist in their present policies concerning the treatment of the Palestinians and the maintaining of Jewish settlements, the chances of peace and security will remain grim.

For every action there is a more violent reaction, said Saleh Al Qalab, a writer in Al Dustour with reference to the rising level of violence in the occupied territories. The writer said that the Israelis have in

the past tried to stem resistance by murdering Arab leaders but the attempts were all in vain and the resistance increased in intensity. Through violence, Israel can never achieve peace and security for the Jewish communities and with the presence of Jewish settlements, acts of resistance are bound to continue, said Mr. Qalab.

Tareq Masraweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that the peace process was bound to be delayed and obstructed largely because the United States is dragging its feet over the question of achieving peace between Syria and Israel. The writer said that by delaying U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region to play a shuttle diplomacy between Damascus and Tel Aviv, Washington is delaying the conclusion of a peace treaty between the two sides.

While Israel and the United States are blaming the Syrians for the delay, everyone realises that it is Israel that is obstructing progress, he said.

According to Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, the Republicans' domination of the U.S. Congress would delay the peace process in the Middle East but the Republican-dominated Congress is likely to block this move so as to deprive the Democrats

of any achievements, said the writer. On the whole, U.S. President Bill Clinton will from now on be in a relatively weak position vis-a-vis the U.S. Congress.

Samih Al Maaitah, a columnist in Al Dustour, addressed the challenges facing the Jordanian government in the wake of the signing of the peace treaty with Israel.

Noting that the negotiations with the Israeli side were continuing over the implementation of the treaty's provisions, the writer said that Israel is most likely to exercise pressures on Jordan in a way that aims at securing the maximum advantages for the Jewish state. The writer said that the rapid normalisation of relations between the two sides is not in favour of Jordan because at this stage the Zionists try to exploit every move as quickly as possible and try to impose their hegemony on various aspects and sectors in Jordan.

He said that the Jordanians ought to show more interest in maintaining the strongest possible ties with the Palestinians and to defend the Palestinian endeavour to end the occupation as a priority preceding normalisation.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, tackled the situation in the wake of Iraq's recognition of Kuwait, the United States has exposed its true face to the world, showing its hostility towards the Arabs in general and determination to cause the demise of the Iraqi population, said Ibrahim Al Absi, a columnist in Al Ra'i. The writer said that perhaps it is in Washington's interest to maintain the sanctions but definitely it is not in the interest of the Kuwaitis and the other Gulf people to see the sanctions causing the death of innocent Iraqi people. The United States is trying to find new pretext for perpetuating the sanc-

tions on Iraq but the Arab states ought to counter this move and respond to the call of reason and save their kinsmen from extermination.

Another columnist echoed the call on the Arab states to end their embargo on Iraq now that Baghdad is ready for reconciliation after recognising Kuwait. Ahmad Dabbas, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab daily, said that Baghdad's compliance with the U.N. resolutions has prompted Russia and France to move towards ending the sanctions.

Tareq Masraweh, paid tribute to Russia for seeking to bring peace between Iraq and Kuwait and at the same time ensure an end to the embargo on the Iraqi people. The writer said that though Kuwait and other Gulf countries could still be adamant in their position, one can count on Moscow to play its cards well and convince the United States and the West of the need to ease the sanctions.

Mr. Masraweh said that with the change of heart in Moscow and Paris about the sanctions, Washington's hold on matters related to Iraq has obviously weakened, especially as the end of the sanctions would bring about many advantages to Russia.

Mohammad Subeih criticised the government's decision for reducing customs duty tariffs on non-essential goods. The writer in Al Dustour said that the government has reduced tariffs on goods consumed by the rich and not the poor who had wished that the prices of basic commodities would drop. The writer said that the majority of the Jordanian people would not go hungry if the prices of cosmetics and artificial flowers and chestnut, remained high.

Another columnist echoed the same view, saying that the people had wished the government would bring down the prices of flour, sugar, medicine and fuel. Samir Hiyari said that while the prices of a basic commodities are continuing to rise, the government chose to reduce the prices of non-essential goods like nuts, squiffs, cosmetics and other non-necessary goods.

Features

By DR Musa Krikar

Russia's active Gulf policy predicated on concern for security of its 'backyard'

By Victor Posavalyuk

I THINK that Iraq's decision to recognise Kuwait and its sovereignty over its land summarises the conclusions of this article which I had prepared earlier in order to explain the initiative we launched during the recent crisis in the Gulf.

Iraq's recognition of Kuwait, is part of a wider process, as I understand, and I think the swirl of reactions stirred by Iraq's manoeuvre near the Kuwaiti border have calmed now. Thus there appears a possibility to, and a need for, calm talk about what happened and what might happen, as well as an end to the ongoing behind-the-scenes drama that started after Iraq occupied Kuwait in August of 1990.

Russia's actions, especially the visit to Iraq by the First Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, and then Minister Andre Kozyrev himself, were met with immediate, harsh and contradictory reactions. Amongst them there were many positive reactions and some were hasty, and even nervous, comments, and at times outright criticism. I even heard jealous remarks asking how Russia could have its own initiatives. I am sure that these transient shades and scenes have, in general, become part of the past. And instead of misunderstandings, the desire to interact and cooperate have resurfaced. I here

refer to the Russian minister who was all through his tour in touch with his American counterpart as well as the foreign ministers of Britain, France, China and other superpowers.

Let me start by Iraq's latest manoeuvres. Russia had condemned them and explicitly said in the first statement issued by it that the threatening language of final warnings to Kuwait and other states was rejected.

I now move to talk about Moscow's political methodology these days, especially that its motives were interpreted in various forms that it is not ruled out that these interpretations are untrue and inconvenient in spirit. The most common of these interpretations was the one claiming that Moscow's main priority was to have Baghdad pay back debts to Moscow, estimated at several billion dollars. These billions were discussed by one article, after another addressed by commentators and commentators. The issue was portrayed as if Mr. Kozyrev had headed towards Baghdad to get these billions in the shortest time possible.

In my belief, this was a superficial assumption about the motives that made the Russian leadership and the minister to personally carry out his very complicated tour. The issue was more critical and sensitive. Russia is a superpower that shoulders the responsibility

of security in this explosive area and areas geographically close to it. It is not a remote area in the sense that we can allow ourselves to overlook political games happening in it. It is an area close to our southern borders and the reverberations of events there are clearly felt in our political life, including the domestic one.

Thus our main job was to guarantee security by converting efforts into a political race. I say more than that: During our long talks in Baghdad, we had not discussed the issue of debts because there were other inflammable issues that required an immediate solution.

It is natural that Iraq's debts to Russia are something that is part of our national interests and we are not ignoring this issue and we will seek to guarantee circumstances that will ensure that Russia gets back money that was spent then. But that is not our main motive for the time being. The basic motive is to guarantee security and stability. And the existence of an explosive conflict near our borders is a direct harm for us.

The superficial interpretation of our motives is clearly taking place as relations between Russia and the Gulf states are being established and enhanced. This appears to be an equivalent to enhancing ties with Iraq and regaining the debts in the stage following

the lifting of the sanctions. Here, I would like to mention that Moscow is now making comprehensive and detailed preparations for the tour by Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin to the Gulf region soon.

At this axis we have what we pride ourselves in and do not want to lose. But I do not want to have one of the two axes as an adversary to the other. If we talk about the future, Russia is a large country and thus it cares about ample openness to the promising and rich Gulf region.

Now I will deal with the outcome of the visit. I am confident that no one will be able to prove to me that the results obtained by Mr. Kozyrev in Baghdad are not substantial. The official statement issued after the meeting with the Iraqi president included for the first time a subject that was formulated in such clarity and officialdom about Iraq's readiness to resolve the question of recognising Kuwait's sovereignty and borders in accordance with Security Council Resolution 833 and in a positive way — and, I reiterate, in accordance with Resolution 833.

And there are no doubts by any objective analyst that this was a serious progress. Another thing is that Iraq had to declare it officially. But Russia has and will exert efforts in this field also. When we had finished coordinating the text of the joint

statement, the radio and television stations in Baghdad halted their broadcasts and the Iraqis for the first time heard this clear formula expressing the readiness of their leadership to recognise Kuwait, which is an independent state and is not the 19th Iraqi province.

Often a question shedding suspicion over Russia's attempts is asked: Do you trust Iraq when implementing your policies and what are your justifications? I think the way the question is formulated is not right, meaning that confidence in politics is something idealistic. If "confidence" was not supported by practical procedures as those which were carried out in Europe within the context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation.

With regard to Iraq, the Security Council resolutions have, after the known incidents, placed it within very strict frameworks. And these are still forcing it to implement the series of resolutions, including those related to liquidating its military programmes, mass destruction weapons and missiles, etc. Within this context, I believe that the long-term monitoring is an effective and dependable method, especially that it has been carried out at a large scale over the past few years by highly qualified international experts and that it utilises the most recent technologies. This

monitoring should be coupled with pressure on Baghdad (and Russia will be the first to apply it) concerning its recognition of Kuwait's independence and its international borders.

When discussing all that, Russia does not talk about an immediate lifting of the sanctions. In this, there is an unintentional error or distortion of facts. Russia refers to the need to start operating the monitoring system (and I stress here that this system is not a present to Iraq, but a traditional, firm procedure and one of the precise monitoring procedures on the way to the full implementation of the U.N. resolutions).

We do not propose the ending of the sanctions, but the start of a testing period. After it ends, and in case that Ralph Ekins' committee confirms that Baghdad fully and honestly abides by the U.N. resolutions, the Security Council can commence debating the issue of lifting the oil embargo, and not all the sanctions. That means the distance ahead is still long.

I would like to note that Mr. Kozyrev and his first deputy held intensive talks about the missing Kuwaitis. I have participated in negotiations held in Moscow with a Kuwaiti delegation that included people looking for missing relatives. One of the delegation's members is looking for two of his brothers. Then it came to my mind that if I

had, God forbid, lost two brothers, I would leave everything else and knock on all doors and destroy mountains so as to find them.

I like, through Al Hayat newspaper, to inform all Kuwaitis that Russia will not neglect the issue and will, with all the determination, discuss it with the Iraqi government in an effort to explain the fate of those missing. We realise that this is a great humanitarian issue that touches the feelings of the Kuwaitis whose family ties occupy a prominent status. Igor Ivanov, the first deputy of the foreign minister, has offered assurances in this regard to Sheikh Salem Al Sabah.

And I gratefully point to the fact that the Kuwaiti side has on its part promised to double its efforts in searching for Russian prisoners of war in Afghanistan, and this is a very important issue for us.

I gave the minister and his assistants great impressions about the talks with King Fahd, the Emir of Kuwait and the President of the United Arab Emirates (and the important thing is that the talks were held on the eve of the visit by Mr. Chernomyrdin). I believe that the meetings had shown development in the level of confidence the leaders of these powerful countries have in Russia and has illuminated the expansion of our political dialogue and a rise in the interest of the

The writer is Russian President Special Envoy to the Middle East and head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry. The article is translated from the London-based Al Hayat newspaper.

Kuwait's ship builders mourn age of simplicity

By Nigel Sequeira

Reuter

KUWAIT — A boat builder as old as the century is reliving his glory days to try to teach affluent Kuwaitis about a time when people survived by manual labour.

If a stained white Arab robe and skullcap, Ali Abdul Rasul walks slowly around a dry dock from dawn to dusk, lovingly supervising the repair of a dhow he built half a century ago.

"In the old days there was no money, but my heart was satisfied," said the doyen of a proud boat-building community once economically vital to the small Gulf state.

"Now I have money," said Mr. Abdul Rasul, in his mid-90s. "But these days I think too much."

Fellow builder Saleh Mohammad Al Qallaf, 65, echoed his nostalgia for a communal seafaring spirit built by decades of toil and but now eroded by easy oil wealth. "Everyone knew each other then," he said. "Now I don't even know my neighbour."

At an age when other men are frail, Mr. Abdul Rasul last month began res-

toring Fatah Al Khair, a stately 40-metre craft he built in 1957-8 that once carried cargoes of spices, dates and wood between the Gulf, India and Africa.

He is indulging a passion thwarted 40 years ago when Kuwait embarked upon an era of leisured super-wealth funded by oil in which his skills and those of his maritime colleagues, the dhow sailors and pearl-divers, became irrelevant.

He has lived since then on building smaller fishing boats, and also, like many other boat builders, on welfare.

Fatah Al Khair was bought by an Iranian 30 years ago when a rapidly developing Kuwait shed many of its dhows.

It was spotted in February in a decrepit state in a Dubai port by researcher Yacoub Al Hajji of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science. The emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, bought the vessel and had it returned to the emirate.

"Thunayan Al Ghaniyah felt like his lost son had come back home," said Abdul Rasul of Fatah Al Khair's former owner.

The foundation is over-

seeing the repairs, expected to take until the end of the year. The vessel will be mounted on a dry dock near parliament as part of a museum display intended to teach present-day Kuwaitis about their maritime roots.

Too old for manual work, Mr. Abdul Rasul perches his wiry frame on a bench while directing a team of Indian carpenters. At his command they clamber over the mouldy timbers tending to rusted metal-work and implanting new reinforcements of Indian oak.

Mr. Abdul Rasul pours team gripping the tray like a vice with strong, meaty hands. He thinks modern workers are soft.

"It took two months to make Fatah Al Khair with our old tools and no electricity, but we worked from sunrise to sunset without any breaks. Now, it will take very long, because they (workers) take too long," he said, referring to the lunch breaks and restricted hours stipulated by modern labour laws.

The boat builders made a range of vessels, creating "boom" and "baghia", large ocean-going ships for India and Africa trade, and

dhows daubed with blood, put out an emergency appeal for donors.

Rioters tore down a metal fence surrounding Gaza City jail and police officers, and threw stones at the troops.

Some 300 rioters also lobbed rocks at Israeli soldiers manning a checkpoint outside the Netzarim settlement, south of Gaza City. The soldiers fired in the air then withdrew and the rioters set fire to their post, witnesses said.

In the southern town of Rafah, hundreds of Hamas supporters took to the streets shouting anti-Arafat slogans.

They attacked a movie house, setting fire to parts of it and damaging seats.

Security forces also sealed off streets leading to government buildings and prevented vehicles from entering Gaza City.

Hamas leaders had urged followers and the police to halt the bloodshed.

Spokesman Mahmoud Al Zahhar urged police to stop firing and told Hamas youth to leave the area and stop throwing stones.

Salab Safade, a Hamas leader, appealed at a mosque rally in Gaza City to people to stop stoning police.

"We don't want a massacre here to continue," he said.

Mr. Arafat summoned his top security aides, and aides said he blamed the fundamentalists who oppose his peacemaking with Israel for the bloodshed. At his seaside headquarters, distant gunfire

could be still be heard in late afternoon.

Sources said Mr. Arafat refused to impose a broad curfew and gave orders to security chiefs to "act firmly, toughly, and to respond severely with armed militants no matter what the results are."

PNA officials said activists of the Hamas group provoked the clash at the mosque. A police statement said police were fired on first.

Tensions have been building as a result of a series of suicide bombings and shootings by Islamic militants aimed at Israeli targets.

The bloodshed has threatened to freeze the expansion of autonomy into the rest of the West Bank, and Mr. Arafat has tried to rein in the main fundamentalist group Hamas.

"We warn these groups of thugs against attempts to harm the public safety," said a spokesman for Gazi Jabali, chief of police in the Gaza Strip where 800,000 Palestinians said.

Some worshippers blamed Mr. Arafat's government.

"This government must be finished, changed as soon as possible. All the people feel this way," said Mahmoud Qassem, 30, who was wounded in the left thigh. "It is worse than the Israelis."

A Hamas activist said the march was planned to be peaceful and was in solidarity with arrested members of the Islamic Jihad who were rounded up by the PNA after attacks on Israeli soldiers.

Ms. Curdy said surveys carried out earlier this year had shown that malnutrition was already on the rise among displaced people,

Winter threatens survival in Kabul

By Alistair Lyon
Reuter

KABUL — Bicycles and carts laden with sacks of flour, bundles of firewood or jerricans through the main crossing point linking divided Kabul whenever fighting subsides.

These petty traders grimace as bullets crack out over the nearby Kabul River, but do not turn back. They pedal harder past the wrecked buildings and thrust crumpled bank notes into the hands of gunmen who exact tolls at checkpoints along the way.

Opposition forces led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and General Abdul Rashid Dostum are blocking the north of the Afghan capital, which is held by allies of President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

But a trickle of goods still reaches government-controlled areas thanks to the profits to be made from the desperate men lugging food and fuel across the battle lines and the private trucks that sometimes bribe their way into the city.

Foreign relief workers say conditions in Kabul could worsen sharply when winter snows replace autumn sunshine and make weakened people vulnerable to normally non-lethal diseases.

"When it gets cold, people will face a choice between freezing or starving," said Steve Masty, the U.S. director of Care International in Kabul. "Or they could just leave and burst Jalalabad at the seams."

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says that in the past few weeks about 1,000 people a day have been arriving from Kabul in the eastern city of Jalalabad, where sprawling camps already hold about 250,000 displaced people.

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Ms. Curdy said surveys carried out earlier this year had shown that malnutrition was already on the rise among displaced people,

An old man waits for handouts (AFP photo)

with young girls worse off than boys.

No one exactly how many people remain in Kabul, but relief workers say those who have stayed are mostly the poorest who cannot pay for transport out.

"People have already sold their possessions. Many are borrowing money to survive and begging has become more important," Ms. Curdy said.

The men carrying goods across the front line keep some for themselves before selling the rest. Some scour shell-scarred ruins for wooden beams which can be chopped up for firewood. Others sell property looted from abandoned homes.

Markets are bustling in districts that have escaped

total devastation, but few Kabulis can afford what is available — the prices of flour and diesel have tripled in the past year.

These benefits have disappeared, although the government has tried to compensate by giving its employees cash bonuses.

While penury threatens most people, there are enough newly rich guerrilla commanders to sustain a market for expensive new four-wheel-drive vehicles stolen in Pakistan and sold openly in Kabul.

"There is a tiny stratum of people making an enormous amount of money out of this war and a large stratum of people that has been impoverished," Mr. Masty said.

Peace and anticipation of Israeli investment builds confidence at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has induced a much-needed confidence to investors in the Amman Financial Market (AFM), leading to higher turnovers and, more importantly, a rise in stock prices in anticipation of Israeli capital entering the market, brokers said Friday.

The weekly report of the AFM said turnover rose to JD 15.1 million last week, up 159 per cent from the previous week's JD 6.1 million.

The general share price index based on 60 major companies closed at 148.7 points, up 3.1 points or 2.2 per cent from the week's opening of 145.6 points, the report said.

The index had gone up to 150.4 points in mid-week before slipping, but the decline was natural because of "adjusting deals" by speculators who sought short-term profit, brokers said.

The industrial sector accounted for JD 8.2 million, or 51.9 per cent, of last week's turnover, followed by commercial banks with JD 4.3 million, or 27.1 per cent, the services sector with JD 3.1 million, or 19.6 per cent, and insurance stock with JD

200,000, or 1.2 per cent. The separate commercial bank shares sector index rose by 3.7 points, or 2.3 per cent, the industrial index by 2.9 points or 2.2 per cent, the services sector index by 1.8 points or 1.3 per cent and the insurance stock index by 0.4 points or 0.4 per cent.

The AFM report said 5.2 million shares changed hands during the week under 6,400 contacts.

Shares of 82 companies were traded during the week, with 63 of them gaining, 11 losing and eight remaining stable.

Brokers attributed upward swing in the market after several months of see-sawing to a general boost in investor confidence after the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was signed and ratified.

"For the first two weeks after the signing of the treaty, investors maintained a very cautious approach," said a broker. "When the treaty was finally formalised (by the exchange of the documents of ratification on Nov. 10) they moved," added the broker, speaking on condition of anonymity under standing market guidelines.

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Also at play last week at the AFM was a trend among investors to acquire shares and adopt positions ahead of figures to be released by many companies in December.

Influencing investors were also signs that Jordan had made a good presentation of its case at the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 economic summit in Casablanca, Morocco, and that the Kingdom could expect some investor interest, the brokers said.

The slow but steady foreign response to Jordan's appeal for debt relief is also influencing investors who take the move as the strong indication yet of a conviction that the Kingdom's economy was turning around fast and could register a better than expected growth this year.

Also helping the market were indications that relations between Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho could be on the way to improvement after several months of uncertainty.

Dr. Touqan was among the Jordanian officials on Thurs-

day. It was an indication that the AFM is expecting Israeli investors to take an interest in Jordanian stocks and the authorities were paving the way for them by discussing the legal aspects of Israeli capital in the stock market.

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Egypt sets new guidelines for dollar sales

CAIRO (R) — The Central Bank of Egypt has told commercial banks not to sell dollars to other banks without checking on the purpose of the sale, the deputy governor has said.

"All the banks are to make sure that the application to buy is a genuine one," Mohammad Al Barbari told Reuters, saying "genuine" included financing imports and repaying debts, but not selling dollars to another bank for a marginal profit.

Foreign exchange dealers in Cairo earlier this week the central bank, anxious to prevent arbitraging between its own dollar rate and those of

commercial banks, was asking questions before it sold its own dollars.

The new guidelines, passed to commercial banks by telephone, go one step further and could be a device to prevent speculative sales of Egyptian pounds in anticipation of a devaluation.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been pressing the government to devalue the pound to stimulate exports but the government has repeatedly said it has no intention of doing so.

Mr. Barbari said the central bank was not interested in the transfer of capital by

individuals or companies. "It is just between banks and banks," he said.

It was unclear how the central bank would enforce the guidelines in the Cairo foreign exchange market, which the government says operates solely by supply and demand.

Dealers said although the central bank had been selling small amounts of dollars slightly cheaper than commercial banks, many buyers did not bother to apply to the central bank because procedures were complicated and too many questions were asked.

It was not immediately clear how anyone could arbitrage between rates offered by two commercial banks.

Dealers said the foreign exchange was calm today despite a slight fall in the dollar rate over the past week.

The dollar is selling at about 3,4050 pounds.

One dealer said the pressure on the Egyptian pound always increased whenever government ministers sat down with representatives of the IMF.

The next round of talks on Egypt's economic reform programme is scheduled for the end of the month.

Iranian deputies approve \$136b plan

TEHRAN (R) — Parliament has approved a \$136 billion five-year plan for Iran after diluting, but not discarding, liberal reforms written into the draft presented by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's government.

The plan, approved after a second debate which started last week, envisages \$73 billion in oil revenue and \$27 billion in non-oil exports between March 21, 1995 and March 20, 2000.

"The government wants to put some pressure on the economy today so that we would not face a national catastrophe in the future," chief government planner

Massoud Roghani Zanjani told Resalat newspaper, defending the price rises called for in the plan.

Many of the changes made in committees and through proposals from the parliament floor were designed to confront foreign borrowing and limit subsidy cuts to cushion the impact of the reforms which have made inflation a widespread complaint.

The most important price rise is a doubling of fuel prices for the first year of the plan and provisions for later rises.

The government wanted an

immediate quadrupling of fuel prices to generate funds for investing in oil production.

"We insist that the amount of subsidies for basic goods such as rice and meat be set down now that we have voted to raise fuel prices and imposed a tax on television sets," deputy Mohammad Qomi said on the last day of the debate.

"There are sections of white-dollar and blue-collar workers who cannot continue living under present conditions with the inflation," he said.

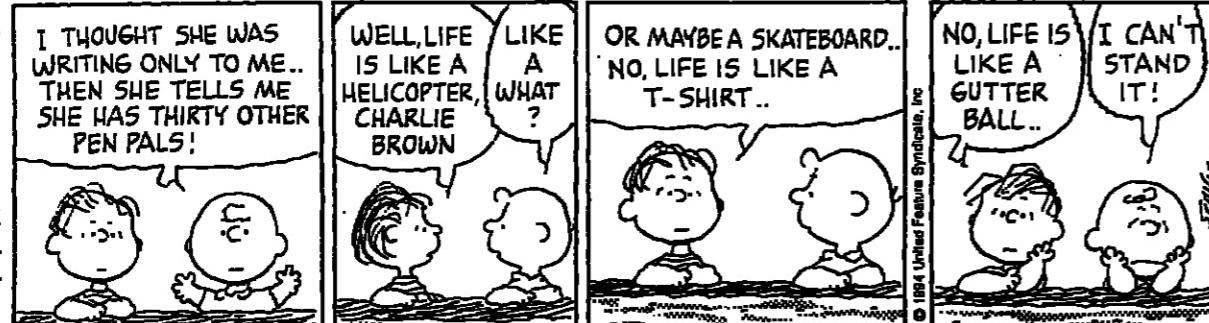
A parliamentary commit-

tee doubled the cash the plan allotted for import of subsidised staples to \$1.25 billion a year.

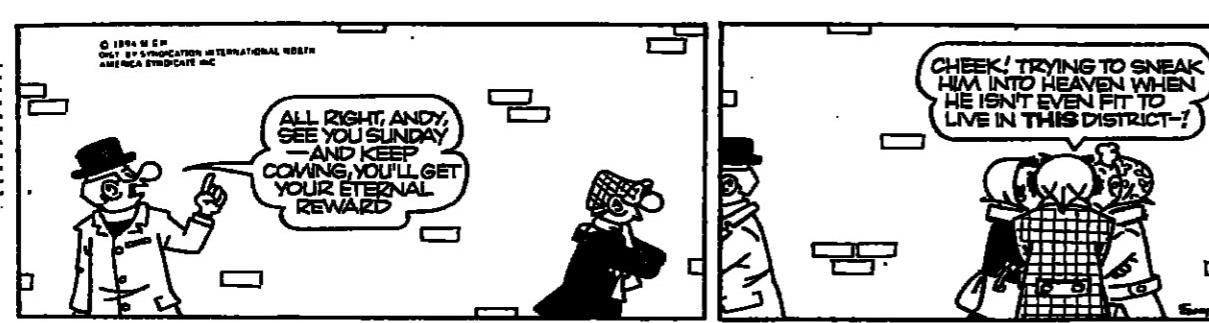
Inflation was officially set at 22 per cent in the last Iranian year ended on March 20, but prices have since risen sharply, promoting the government to launch an anti-inflation drive last month.

The new plan envisages an annual inflation rate of 12.4 and about the same growth in money supply. Money supply growth was one of the targets most seriously overshot in the first plan as a result of a sharp devaluation of the rial last year.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Merrill Lynch not convinced dollar's downward trend is over

The following report, covering the period from Thursday Nov. 10, 1994 until Wednesday Nov. 16, 1994, was provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai.

Overview

Fundamental view: The Fed's 75 basis point rate hike on Nov. 15 has boosted the dollar somewhat, but we are not convinced that the dollar's downturn is over. U.S. external borrowing requirements remain huge, at about \$280 billion per year. With the U.S. economy still strong and the yield currently still steep — indicating that monetary policy is not viewed as restrictive — foreign investors are still likely to be uncomfortable about investing in U.S. financial markets. Our U.S. economists expect more Fed tightening ahead, and believe the Fed funds rate will be pushed up to 6.25% higher by the second quarter of next year. Futures markets are more pessimistic, and are pricing in 3-month money rates of 7.4% by next September.

Also at play last week at the AFM was a trend among investors to acquire shares and adopt positions ahead of figures to be released by many companies in December.

Everybody knows that speculation in the stock market is a favourite means of investments for Israelis as is evidenced in the Tel Aviv bourse," noted the broker. "Given the average daily volume of \$100 million in Tel Aviv, it is only natural that even a small slice of it diverted to Jordan will make a big difference to the AFM."

Furthermore, noted the broker, Israel has introduced taxation on capital gains, including profits made in the stock market. The Jordanian government is studying a similar measure but it is not expected to take effect soon.

However, foreign investors are expected to be exempt from the proposed measure. Israel also taxes income gained outside, but at a lower rate of tax than on income derived within the country. As such, the Jordanian stock market is ideal for many Israeli speculators.

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The slow but steady foreign response to Jordan's appeal for debt relief is also influencing investors who take the move as the strong indication yet of a conviction that the Kingdom's economy was turning around fast and could register a better than expected growth this year.

Also helping the market were indications that relations between Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho could be on the way to improvement after several months of uncertainty.

Although there has been some recent deterioration, sentiment for the dollar versus the European currencies remains overbought, while sentiment for the yen is now viewed as natural.

The strength of recent weeks may be sufficient to signal that a medium term rally is under way, with indicated resistance about \$88.00. The long-term (post-February) down-trend remains intact, with long term resistance in the \$89.00-\$91.00 range. The index has so far held support at \$84.90, but a decisive break of that level could well signal further weakness to below \$83.00 and perhaps a full test to the 1992 low near \$80.00.

Japanese yen

Fundamental view: The dollar has strengthened only modestly against the yen despite the Fed's larger-than-expected 75 basis point rate hike on Nov. 15 and recent evidence that Japan's trade surplus continues to shrink gradually. The Fed's tilt toward a more restrictive stance could help support the dollar around its current level of JPY/USD 98.4 a bit longer, but we think the need for massive dollar buying by the Bank of Japan (BOJ) and the Fed in recent weeks underscores the lack of demand for U.S. assets by foreign investors.

Japan's trade surplus continues to shrink, with the surplus in October down 15% to \$9.3 billion. That trend should eventually help to support the dollar but the problem has been with capital flows. Japan's private capital outflows — including short- and long-term capital — have shrunk even faster than the trade surplus in recent quarters, leaving it to the Bank of Japan mop up the excess supply of dollars. With Japan's economy continuing to recover, we do not expect any further easing from the Bank of Japan.

However, the scheduled appointment in December of a new BOJ governor who hails from Japan's ailing banking industry has prompted speculation that interest rate will remain low for longer. We continue to expect the dollar to weaken further against the yen over the next 6-to-12 months, to as low as JPY/USD even as the Fed continues to tighten monetary policy.

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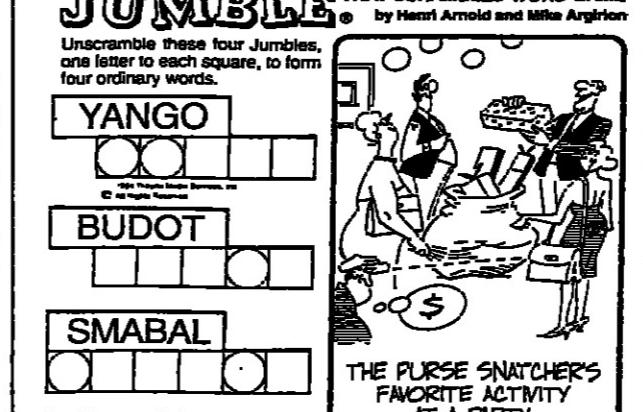
By Glasberg



"Stop the food fight! I've got a pork chop in my sinuses!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRABBLE WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mitzi Aronson



Print answer here: THE

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: FLAKE ELEGY CORRAL RITUAL
Answer: What the birds gave the nature lovers —
A REAL TRILL

Technical view: The Japanese yen fell 0.3% versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Nov. 11. Sentiment continues to deteriorate and is now viewed as neutral. Despite the fact that momentum only moved to neutral from its prior overbought readings, there are some initial signs of renewed strength. This will have to be monitored closely in coming weeks. The underlying uptrend is still intact, and important support exists in the 100.80-101.80 YU.S. range. Important resistance remains at 96.60-97.60; a break of that level would allow for a move through 93.

Deutschmark

Fundamental view: Following the sweeping Republican victory in U.S. mid-term elections, the Fed's larger-than-expected rate 75 basis point rate hike on Nov. 15 has helped the dollar recover to the DM/USD 1.55 level. The Fed's more aggressive stance may support the dollar in the near term, but we are convinced that the dollar has bottomed yet from a longer-term perspective. America's external borrowing requirements remain huge, but foreigners may continue to view the Deutschemark as a safe-haven asset until they are convinced that interest rates are close to a peak. Futures markets are pricing in a rise in U.S. short-term interest rates to nearly 7.4% by next September, and foreigners investors are not likely to be confident holders of U.S. financial assets until the yield curve is flatter and futures markets point to less need for tightening ahead.

On the German side, there is not expected to be a change in monetary policy any time in the next several quarters. Bundesbank officials have made it clear that they consider dollar weakness to be a U.S. problem that should be dealt with by U.S. policy, including interest rate hikes. Fed tightening should eventually help the dollar rebound against the Deutschemark, but we expect the rally to come from lower levels. We continue to expect the dollar to trade down to DM/USD 1.45 over the next six-to-12 months.

Technical view: The Deutschemark declined 1.0% against the U.S. dollar last week. Despite recent improvement, sentiment for the D-mark remains at overbought readings. Momentum has been deteriorating since August, and still seems to have the potential to remain under pressure for the rest of the year. This suggests that the D-mark's underlying post-February upturn is the process of forming a top: the likelihood of lower D-mark levels over the next three to six months appears to be fairly good.

Even so, a decline back through at least 1.54 DM/U.S.\$ and more likely 1.60, still seems needed to actually reverse the upturn and fully substantiate the action of momentum. Strong resistance remains at 1.48;

1st Division Basketball Championship

Hussein score vital win over Homemmen; Ahli, Orthodoxi continue unbeaten streak

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Hussein scored their first win and took the initial step towards securing their place in the First Division Basketball Championship when they overcame Homemmen 67-54 Thursday and added a precious two points to their standings.

In other matches, Al Ahli could only score a 96-69 win over Al Jalil — the titleholders' first win below the 100 point mark — while Al Orthodoxi scored a big 107-59 victory over Al Watani who will need to defeat Al Hussein Sunday in order to decide which team will accompany Homemmen to the second division.

Al Hussein's win Sunday ended Homemmen's chances of avoiding relegation after the team failed to score the necessary minimum number of three wins. Nevertheless Homemmen might have easily scored their first win had their lineup been complete, as Al Hussein played their worst match and capitalised on their opponents ball-

handling mistakes and individual play.

Homemmen missed the efforts of playmaker Robert Chatmajian and Vasken Ajemian, both of whom would have been instrumental in assisting their teammates score a face-saving win.

Homemmen had a bad start to the game as many key players and even their coach were not present at the start of the match since the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) had recently announced the match would be held at 8 p.m., while the referees insisted that it begin at 7:30 according to the previous schedule announced at the beginning of the competition. Thus players who had come early to watch the previous match forced the original lineup!

Al Hussein took the lead early in the match at 16-9, but Sevan Sarkissian narrowed the gap to 19-15. However, Al Hussein again succeeded in widening the gap 28-18 before Sarkissian and teammate Vicken Avakian managed to catch up at 28-24.

Homemmen's Avakian

was the top scorer in the second half, as most bench players who represented his team in this match lacked the experience and were not effective, while Al Hussein easily scored through fast breaks taking advantage of many loose balls and intercepted passes.

Al Hussein led 62-45 before Homemmen managed to score the final minutes ending the match with a 13-point win for Al Hussein.

In an earlier match, former champions Al Orthodoxi turned up with only seven key players against Al Watani giving Mudar Barakat and Jack Koro a rest to heal their injuries before their important match against titleholders Al Ahli.

Al Orthodoxi tried their full court press defence by which they took total control of the match and ended the first half 52-21.

Al Ahli managed to better their score in the second half, but Al Orthodoxi ended the match with a 107-59 win.

In Irbid, Al Jalil gave the titleholders a hard time be-

fore losing 96-69.

To everyone's amazement, scoring remained close throughout the first half as Al Ahli led 25-16 before ending the first half with a mere 10-point win at 43-33.

Al Jalil managed to catch up early in the second half and reduced the gap to 58-51.

However, Al Ahli altered their style in the second half and built a fast lead at 76-58 before sealing their fourth consecutive win.

Al Ahli now lead the standings with eight points from four matches, followed by Al Jazreh, Al Orthodoxi and Al Jalil.

The four teams seem set to maintain standings

STANDINGS

| | P | W | L | SF | SA | Pts. |
|-----------|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|
| Ahli | 4 | 4 | — | 480 | 216 | 8 |
| Jazreh | 4 | 3 | 1 | 333 | 305 | 7 |
| Orthodoxi | 3 | 3 | — | 315 | 170 | 6 |
| Jalil | 4 | 2 | 2 | 324 | 301 | 6 |
| Watani | 5 | 1 | 4 | 340 | 467 | 6 |
| Homemmen | 5 | — | 5 | 225 | 488 | 5 |
| Hussein | 3 | 1 | 2 | 197 | 267 | 4 |

*Orthodoxi-Hussein have a postponed match.

Olympians see television improving image of athletics

NEW YORK (R) — Two Olympic sprinters on Thursday lauded plans to telecast next year's Mobil Indoor Track Field Circuit in the United States, saying it would raise long-overdue interest in the sport here.

"It is time for us to take our place in the world of sports and this series of track meets is the first stepping stone towards that," said Dennis Mitchell about the plans to broadcast five consecutive meets through February, beginning with the famed Millrose Games here at Madison Square Garden February 3.

Mitchell, the 1992 Olympic bronze-medalist in the 100 metres, was joined by his Olympic teammate Michael

Johnson, a member of the gold medal winning American 4x100 relay team at a news conference.

"Track and field will be on TV every weekend for a month and it will look like a big show and that is going to be make it attractive to the fans," said Mitchell, who has committed to running in three of the events.

"The sport is no where near close to reaching its full potential. This will start to develop the fan base here to get track and field back on its feet," Johnson said.

It is ironic to Mitchell that a series like this is necessary to show the American fans what the rest of the world has seen for a long time.

Prolific Patriot passer poses problem

WASHINGTON (AFP) — New England quarterback Drew Bledsoe has become an aerial force in American Football, throwing opponents off balance by passing his way into the record books.

Bledsoe, the first choice in last year's National Football League (NFL) draft, has thrown for a league-best 3,031 yards. He tossed a one-game record 70 passes last week, rallying the Patriots over Minnesota 26-20 in overtime.

"It didn't seem like so many," said Bledsoe, who completed 45 passes for a team-record 426 yards and three touchdowns. "We were going to throw until they forced us to do something

else and they never did." In 10 games, Bledsoe has completed 264 of 471 passes for 17 touchdowns and 18 interceptions. With six games remaining, Bledsoe could threaten the NFL single-season passing record of 5,084 yards set by Dan Marino in 1984.

Endurance is not a worry for Bledsoe, even after 70 passes in one game.

"My arm doesn't feel that bad. It's doing OK," he said Thursday. "It's a lot easier when you are completing them. We thought we could get them tired on defense and now that's a weapon we can use against other teams."

Expect Bledsoe to fill the skies again this week when the Patriots (4-6) host San

Diego, which had the NFL's worst pass defense last season. The Chargers (8-2) now share the NFL's top record with Dallas, San Francisco and Cleveland but have only one triumph over a contending club.

"I've never seen a quarterback throw that many times. I didn't think it was possible," San Diego defender Shawn Lee said. "It's truly amazing. And our defense is a lot like Minnesota's. But if he throws 70 again this week, I guarantee at least one interception."

Players went out on strike

August 12 to protest the owners desire to impose a salary cap. The owners retaliated a month later by cancelling the season and the championship World Series which had been played every year since 1904.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Aqaba skiing competition concludes

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Youth Fawwaz Abu Ghannam deputised for His Majesty King Hussein at the Aqaba International Skiing competition, organised by the Royal Jordanian Marine Sports Federation and the Aquanaria Hotel. Fifty-four competitors represented Belgium, France, Britain, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain and Jordan in the championship sanctioned by the International Skiing Federation.

Europe's sprint queen Lochnag retiring

LONDON (R) — European champion sprinter racehorse Lochnag is to be retired. Trainer Ian Balding said the mare had returned from the Breeders' Cup with a leg injury. Lochnag finished last in Kentucky but had dominated the European sprint scene for the past two years when she was unbeatable over five furlongs.

Papin in new injury agony

MUNICH (AFP) — Bayern Munich's French striker Jean-Pierre Papin was hit by new injury agony here Friday when he broke a bone in his left hand in training. The injury, which has already been operated on, will keep him out of Saturday's Bundesliga match with Karlsruhe. The former AC Milan player returned to action last week as a substitute after a prolonged knee injury to score his first goal of the season for his new club against Schalke 04.

France rocked by new soccer scandal

PARIS (AFP) — France was rocked by a new football scandal here Friday when Francis Borelli, president of first division side Cannes, was accused of financial fraud. The charges date back to when Borelli was president of reigning champions Paris Saint Germain, a post he took up in 1978 and which he held during the glory years that saw the club win the French Cup in 1982 and 1983 and lift their first league title in 1986. Borelli became president at Cannes in 1992. Last season Olympique Marseille, the 1993 European Champions, were relegated to the second division and stripped of their 1992/93 French title following a match-fixing scandal.

Bonaly, Kwan trail in French Trophy skating

LYON (AP) — Marie-Pierre Leray of France took the lead after the women's short programme Thursday of the French Trophy International Figure Skating Competition. The French Trophy is a new event in France this year, replacing the Lalique Trophy which lost its competition status after a feud with the French Skating Federation over television rights. Favoured Surya Bonaly of France and Michele Kwan of the United States followed. Bonaly, the four-time European champion, fell on a triple Axel jump. Kwan, the 14-year-old who is the top American hope this year, was fourth.

Saudi Arabia captures Gulf Cup

ABU DHABI (AP) — Saudi Arabia clinched the Gulf Cup soccer championship for the first time in the tournament's 24-year history after outsmarting Kuwait for a 2-0 win in their final match. The Saudis finished with nine points from five matches, second place was host United Arab Emirates, who defeated winless Oman 2-0 in the tournament's last match, and ended with eight points. The Arab World's premier soccer tournament, held every other year, began in 1970. It is held in round-robin format.

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Sports

TS IN BRIEF

competition concluded

Minister of Youth Affairs, Mr. Majeed King Hussein, attended the competition, organized by the Jordan Sports Federation.

Fifty four competition, representing 12 countries, participated in the competition.

Int'l Queen Lochaong retiring

European champion sprinter

retired, Imane Idrissi, said

she finished last in Kentucky, but

European sprint seems to be the most

resistant over five sprints.

w/ Injury agony

Bavaria Munich's French

was hit by new injury again here

home in his left hand to continue

already been operated on and keep

Bundesliga match with Bayern

player returned to action last week

practiced knee injury to make

for his new club against Schalke

ted by new soccer scandal

France was rocked by a new

scandal, was accused of financial

to when there were president of

Saint Germain, a post he took up in

the glory years that saw the

Coupe in 1987 and 1988 and then

Borrell became president of L'As

Olympique Marseille, the last Euro-

relegated to the second division

1992-93 French title following a

trial in French Trophy Skating

Jane-Pierre Lefevre of France has

a short programme, Thursday,

International Figure Skating Competi-

tion is a new event in France, the

French Trophy which lost its com-

petitors from the British Skating Federa-

Favourites Survey: Survey of France

of the United States followed by the

French champion, fell on a trap, crashing

on a double Axel jump, was

in the top American line that

is held in round robin

and Studio For Re-

lief Equipped

action: Abdoun

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ENVIRONMENT SOUTHERN

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FOR SALE

Wales manager Mike Smith

suffered the most humiliating

defeat in its history

Wednesday, losing 5-0 to

late entrant Georgia in

qualifying for the 1996 Euro-

pean Championship.

The loss, coupled with a

2-2 defeat last month in

another former Soviet Repub-

lic, Moldova, all but

losed the door on Welsh

open for qualifying for the

team. Though it's still early

in the tournament, Wales

must play four of its seven

remaining games against

top favorites Germany and

Bulgaria.

Although Smith could not

call upon Manchester United

Winger Ryan Giggs, who

missed the game through injur-

y, his strikeforce had

another United star, Mark

Hughes, as well as Liver-

pool's Ian Rush and Dan

Saunders of Aston Villa,

some of Europe's most

feared strikers.

But it was the Welsh de-

fense that was repeatedly

torn apart by Georgia's swift

forwards. Temoliz Ketseba

nearly tied it in the dying

seconds when his free kick hit

the post, the Albanians have

lost both their qualifying

matches.

Yusef Zanjani netted for

Albania, and Ledio Pano

nearly tied it in the dying

seconds when his free kick hit

the post, the Albanians have

lost both their qualifying

matches.

A lone service break in the

seventh game, when Pierce

took advantage of Graf's invit-

ing second serves, gave the

Frenchwoman her winning

margin in the first set, which

she ended with an emphatic

set point and 7.5 rebounds a

game in three college seas-

ons. Terms of his contract

were not released, but the

prospect of playing alongside

Howard was key to bringing

Webber to the nation's capi-

tal.

Howard averaged 15.3

points and 7.5 rebounds a

game in three college seas-

ons. Terms of his contract

were not released, but the

prospect of playing alongside

Howard was key to bringing

Webber to the nation's capi-

tal.

Howard and Webber will

join the team Saturday for a

practice session before play-

ing their first NBA game

together Saturday night when the

Bullets host the Boston

Celtics.

Howard, averaged 15.3

points and 7.5 rebounds a

game in three college seas-

ons. Terms of his contract

were not released, but the

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Big U.N. majority for Palestinian self-determination

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United States and Israel cast the only negative votes on Thursday when a U.N. committee reaffirmed, by an overwhelming majority, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

The vote in the General Assembly's social, humanitarian and cultural committee was 124 to two, with 27 abstaining.

Russia which, together with the United States, is a sponsor of Middle East peace negotiations, was among those countries abstaining.

The resolution now goes to the assembly plenary, where it is certain to be endorsed.

In addition to reaffirming the Palestinians' right to self-determination, it expresses the hope that they might soon exercise this right in the current peace process. It also urges all states and U.N. agencies to continue to extend their support to the Palestinian people in their quest for self-determination.

The U.N. representative, after listing the progress made so far in the Middle East peace talks, said the resolution could only be understood as "an effort to shape the outcome of these negotiations and in so doing, it can undermine their very basis."

The role of the international community was "not to interject itself into controversy by siding with one side's position or the other's or to prejudice the outcome of the negotiations," he said.

Israel's envoy told the committee the resolution was intended to pre-determine the outcome of permanent status talks between Israel and the Palestinians. These are due to begin no later than the

start of the third year of a five-year transitional period which began with Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area earlier this year.

He said this contradicted obligations undertaken by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in a declaration of principles signed with Israel in September 1993, as well as the principle of direct negotiations without preconditions.

The PLO's observer said those who opposed the right of self-determination for the Palestinians "would in practice be opposing history, law, the United Nations Charter and international law."

Genuine support for the peace process necessarily demanded that the Palestinian people be supported in exercising their right to self-determination, because otherwise there could be no just and lasting peace in the Middle East," he said.

Germany, speaking on behalf of the 12-nation European Union as well as Austria, Finland and Sweden, which all voted for the resolution, said the exercise of the right of self-determination was an ongoing process and could be implemented in a variety of ways.

It was also the European Union's long-standing position that reaffirmation of the Palestinians' right to self-determination went hand in hand with reaffirmation of the right of all countries in the region, including Israel, to live in peace within secure and internationally recognised borders. The EU welcomed the fact that both these elements were reflected in the amended version of the resolution that was adopted.

Hurricane Gordon whips N. Carolina

OCRACOKE, North Carolina (AFP) — Hurricane Gordon, wheeling toward the U.S. mainland, lashed the barrier islands off North Carolina with fierce winds, blowing seaside cottages off their pilings, authorities said.

Meteorologists upgraded Gordon to a hurricane Thursday, after the storm that left a trail of death and destruction in the Caribbean and Florida strengthened in the Atlantic.

In North Carolina, cottages perched on pilings were hurled into the sea.

Coastal residents, who thought they were out of harm's way, were surprised to find the storm was arching back toward the mainland. "It's a total surprise," said Bob Sheets, director of the centre, "it's just been a complex system," he added.

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After sweeping over Jamaica and Cuba, Gordon crossed southern Florida spawning numerous tornadoes, flooding thousands of acres of fruit and vegetables, and killing six people.

Florida Governor Lawton Chiles declared a state of emergency for the southern and central part of the state.

France, U.K. have joint air command

(Continued from page 1)

Earlier, French presidential spokesman Jean Mustilli openly criticised Washington over the move.

"We regret that our American allies have acted unilaterally, and without giving much concern for their allies on the ground," he said, reporting discussions between Mr. Major and French President Francois Mitterrand.

"We must convince the Americans not to continue down this path," he said.

Israeli team leaves after talks

(Continued from page 1)

Ministry secretary-general, issued a statement after the evening's talks saying that the two countries would announce the establishment of diplomatic relations in a joint statement on Nov. 27.

Other officials said the two countries will open embassies in Tel Aviv and Amman on Dec. 10, exactly one month after His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin exchanged the documents of ratification of the peace treaty.



CLASHES IN GAZA: Muslim fundamentalists mourn one of their dead carried on a stretcher after being shot by Palestinian police during heavy clashes in Gaza City. Last reports give one policeman and 12 demonstrators dead and at least 200 people injured (see page one) (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mubarak warns Europe on new threat

LONDON (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has warned Europe it could face a new wave of Middle East if promised Western aid for the Palestinians does not materialise soon. "My fear is that there will soon be an explosion in Gaza, more dangerous than Afghanistan," Mr. Mubarak told the Times newspaper in an interview published Friday prior to his European tour beginning Sunday. Mr. Mubarak said such unrest could destabilise the whole Middle East and spill over into Europe, saying "it is very easy to go from here to Europe especially as you have cells of (Muslim) fundamentalists all over Europe now. I blame the donors," he added, for donor countries had only paid up a tiny proportion of the \$2.24 billion of aid pledged to the Palestinian authority headed by Yasser Arafat. The donors "should hurry up," Mr. Mubarak added. "In Gaza there are no jobs, no infrastructure, no healthcare. If this goes on, nobody on earth could persuade the people there to stay calm," he warned. "An explosion would encourage many fundamentalists to go there and fight alongside the Palestinians. I hope people realise the danger."

Israeli right ahead in polls

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's right-wing opposition would win elections if they were held today, according to an opinion poll published Friday. The Yediot Aharonot newspaper found that the Likud party would win 41 seats in the 120-member house compared with the 32 seats it now holds. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party would lose four seats and drop to 40 seats. His left-wing coalition partner Meretz would win nine seats, three fewer than in the 1992 elections. That would let in a nationalist-religious coalition with the backing of four or five minor parties. However, Mr. Rabin remained more popular than Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, winning 46 per cent support against 42 per cent for his main rival. And in the next elections, scheduled for Nov. 1996, the prime minister is due to be elected directly for the first time. Parliament has in the past voted for the premier. Some 49 per cent of Israelis favoured dismantling Jewish settlements in the occupied territories while 46 per cent were against while five per cent voiced no view. The Dahaf Institute interviewed 500 Israelis on Tuesday for the survey which had an error margin of four percent.

Greenpeace to analyse 'toxic waste' in Beirut

BEIRUT (AFP) — Experts from the environmental group Greenpeace have taken samples from dozens of barrels of toxic waste to determine their origin, spokesman Fuad Hamdan said on Friday. The experts who arrived Tuesday in Lebanon aboard the Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior wore gas masks and special suits to open barrels, stored in two large containers at Beirut port, and take the samples, he said. Dozens of barrels of hazardous industrial waste were found in mountainous areas northeast of Beirut earlier this year, prompting a debate between the authorities and non-government organisations (NGOs) over their origin. "The way the barrels are stored is highly inadequate because organic vapours are leaking out of the containers," said Greenpeace scientist Ruth Stringer. "The vapours are strong irritants and the waste would be dangerous if handled without extreme care," she added. Lebanese Environment Minister Samir Moqbel has said the barrels contain "ethyl acrylate and methyl acrylate" — substances used to produce plastics.

U.N. spokesman George Bennett on Thursday told AFP that Hargeisa came under attack Tuesday by forces loyal to Mr. Tuur, and quoted rebel sources as saying the president had left the town.

Speaking from the Somali capital Mogadishu, Mr. Bennett said Mr. Tuur's men claimed to control Hargeisa and that Mr. Egil had fled to his stronghold of Berbera, some 300 kilometres to the northeast on the Gulf of Aden.

But Mr. Egil said the rebels were "young boys" out to exact revenge on his government for ordering troops to dislodge them from Hargeisa airport where they wanted to continue their "very lucrative activities," levying taxes on arriving and departing flights.

Somaliland declared itself independent in 1991 after the fall of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre, as the rest of Somalia plunged into clan strife and mass starvation, leading to large-scale intervention by the United States and then the United Nations.

U.N. peacekeepers are all due to pull out by the end of next March. Rival clan leaders have failed to agree on forming an interim government, and Mr. Egil's regime has declared it will have nothing to do with the rest of the country, a former Italian-ruled territory.

The battle of the past few days is the first heavy fighting in Somaliland in more than a year and comes as the United Nations prepares to withdraw its 16,500 peacekeepers from southern Somalia by March 31.

The country's major warlords have been engaged for months in what U.N. spokesman Bennett on Thursday called a "destructive rivalry" to gain power following the U.N. withdrawal.

Sources reached by telephone in Hargeisa on Thursday spoke of heavy fighting near the central police station and the city's major open-air market.

Majali begins Qatar visit today

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Saturday starts an official visit to Qatar at the invitation of Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa, the Qatari crown prince and defence minister.

An official announcement issued Friday said that Dr. Majali would spend several days in Qatar during which he would meet with the country's ruler, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani and other officials.

Dr. Majali's visit to Qatar is an embodiment of brotherly relations between Jordan and Qatar and a manifestation on the part of the two countries to enhance and bolster ties between the two peoples," the statement said.

It said that the prime minister's talks would aim at further bolstering these relations and would also cover the peace process.

The prime minister is also expected to meet with Jordanians living in Qatar, the statement noted, adding that Dr. Majali will be accompanied by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, director of his office Akham Qousous and Rafe' Shahin, his press advisor.

Mr. Kuwari expressed Qatar's support for the treaty, and said that it would give impetus to the achievement of comprehensive peace in the region, the prime minister said.

Speaking in the presence of Information Minister Jawad Anani, Dr. Kuwari outlined his country's efforts to maintain cooperation with Jordan in information.

Dr. Kuwari noted that Qatar and Jordan had signed an agreement on cooperation in information fields in 1980

and said it was time for the two sides to upgrade the pact.

Israel builds roads ahead of redeployment

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel has begun to build a major road network in the West Bank to enable settlers to avoid Palestinian areas after the army's redeployment, officials said Friday.

Mr. Egil told AFP by telephone that the city was now "very calm" and denied reports that he had fled the capital of the region in the north of Somalia for the coastal town of Berbera.

Mr. Egil said at least 60 to 70 civilians were believed killed in the attacks since Tuesday, while the death toll for government forces was put at eight with 20 wounded.

He said prisoners had been taken but did not give a casualty toll for the rebels.

Mr. Egil said his troops were preparing to "flush out" armed rebels still hiding in Hargeisa on Saturday or Sunday, describing them as "young boys" who behaved like bandits.

He denied a U.N. report that they were supporters of the founder of the breakaway republic in former British Somaliland, Abdurrahman Ahmad Ali. "Tuur," who was ousted in February

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin still has given a green light for the project, housing ministry officials said.

Some 120,000 Israelis are scattered across the West Bank in about 120 settlements.

A settler spokesman Pinhas Wallerstein voiced strong support for the project which he said would boost security for Israelis and enable the development of their colonies.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned Thursday that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) operating in the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank could be stripped of its powers if it failed to establish order.

"Israel expects the Palestinian Authority to take the situation in hand," Mr. Peres told Israel radio. "If the Palestinians do not understand that, the powers that they exercise could be taken away from them."

He did not elaborate. But his remarks followed

Blind cleric rushed to hospital from prison

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the Egyptian cleric charged with plotting to bomb the United Nations and other landmarks, was rushed to a hospital on Thursday suffering from pneumonia, a source said.

"MCC medical staff had described Dr. Abdul Rahman as possibly having pneumonia," the Marshals Service said in a statement. "He is currently being examined and treated in a hospital setting where his condition is described as not life threatening."

Mr. Sattar said Dr. Abdul Rahman was hesitant to go to the hospital because he wanted to continue to prepare for the Nov. 28 start of jury selection for his trial in U.S. district court in Manhattan.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman and 11 others are accused of conspiring to bomb New York landmarks, including the United Nations headquarters. The cleric was removed

COLUMN 10

Scientists claim discovery of Element 110

BERLIN (AP) — Scientists in Germany have claimed discovery of a new element, with atomic number 110, the heaviest ever produced. The presence of the element was proved at 4:39 p.m. on Nov. 9 after days of bombardment with billions of lead atoms with billions of nickel atoms in the heavy ion research centre at Darmstadt in southern Germany, the centre said late Thursday.

He told the visiting Qatari official that Jordan was seeking to safeguard common interest Arab interests and strengthen ties with all Gulf countries.

Dr. Majali's visit to Qatar is an embodiment of brotherly relations between Jordan and Qatar and a manifestation on the part of the two countries to enhance and bolster ties between the two peoples," the statement said.

It said that the prime minister's talks would aim at further bolstering these relations and would also cover the peace process.

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and said it was time for the two sides to upgrade the pact.

Mr. Peres also sharply rebuked the head of the PNA, Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat, following a speech Tuesday in which Mr. Arafat apparently inadvertently referred to "the Israeli enemy" (see page 2).

"Recent statements by Yasser Arafat give the impression that he is no longer in control of what he says and do damage to the peace process," Mr. Peres said.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin still has given a green light for the project, housing ministry officials said.

Some 120,000 Israelis are scattered across the West Bank in about 120 settlements.

Theories differ on whether dinosaurs were more closely related to birds or reptiles. "I believe that there could be dinosaur groups that fit into both categories or even a category of neither," he said. DNA, found in cells, is the genetic code that guides the development and growth of plants and animals. The DNA specimen recovered is not the oldest on record.

Researchers have previously recovered 125-million-year-old DNA from a weevil preserved in amber. It was not possible to identify the species of dinosaur from the bones, one of which appeared to be a section of rib. The bones possibly came from two different animals, the article said.

General Danny Rothschild, Israeli coordinator for the occupied territories, means threatened to hold up payments for Palestinian police in a gesture aimed at "punishing violations" of the PLO-Israeli accord on Palestinian autonomy.

4,500 more permits

The Israeli military authorities will next week deliver another 4,500 permits to Palestinians, taking the total number allowed in to 28,500 a spokeswoman said Friday.

The permits will be for agricultural workers, divided equally between the Gaza Strip and West Bank, said Captain Hanan Jeshurun.

A total of 8,500 permits are for agricultural workers and the rest for construction and industry.

TV presenter raps Britain on cot deaths

LONDON (R) — A British television presenter, whose own son was a "cot death" victim, accused the government linking the deaths to toxic chemicals in fireproof mattresses. A report on Independent Television News linked cot death with antimony and other chemicals used to fire-proof mattresses.

It says that of 43 victims of cot death (sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS), more than one-half had raised levels of antimony in their bodies. Anne Diamond, who fronted the government's campaign against cot death after her son died three years ago, discovered that her baby had traces of the toxic chemical in his body.

Findings linking toxic chemicals to cot deaths were presented to the government several years ago but officials dismissed it. "Given the fact that they (the government) have been negligent for three years and hundreds of babies might have died of this they should do something about this and very fast," she told Independent Television News.